THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821
THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA

Vol. 77 — PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT 420 ARCH STREET — Philadelphia, Saturday, December 4, 1897 — FIVE CENTS A COPY $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE — No. 23

Entered at the Philadelphia Post-Office as Second-Class Matter

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IN THE FADING LIGHT.

BY M. M.

Backwards I go in the twilight gloom,
And my work unheeded lies,
While shadows lurk in my lonely room
As the firelight flames and dies—
Back from the wintry frost and rime,
From my daily toil and care,
With a smile and sigh o'er the sands of time,
Away to days that were—

Away to the springs of long ago,
Away to a sunlit land
Where pain was a word and a fable woe,
Where I laughed and dreamed and
planned—
Away to the long and cloudless days,
Away to the fragrant sod,
Away to the thornless flowery ways
That my joyous footsteps trod—

Away to the time when my trust was whole,
To the time when life was sweet,
To the days when neither my heart nor soul
Was hardened by dark deceit—
Away to the days when the skies were blue,
When the larks and I could sing,
To the days when little I thought or knew
Of love or of suffering!

Backward I go in the fading light
From the present far away,
Till my soul grows strong and mine eyes grow
bright
And my heart once more is gay.
Remembrance brightens the dreary gloom
And banishes woe and care,
When she leads me far from my lonely room
Away to the days that were!

FOR HIM ALONE.

BY B. M. C.

CHAPTER I.

THE Christmas Eve that brought happiness to so many thousands of homes brought to me nothing more than a long uncomfortable journey and the novelty of a first situation; for I had traveled from London to the lake-country; and when I reached the station at Ulladale, my senses were numbed with cold and frost.

Evidently some mistake had been made as to the time of the trains, for the carriage which I had expected would be sent to meet me had not yet arrived. Anything was better than remaining there, so I resolved to fill up the time that I must wait in walking down the road to Ulladale.

In the distance was the pretty town, the church-spires of which stood out tall and white. Just as I reached the end of the road, the moon came out from behind the clouds and cast a silvery gleam over the snow-clad scene, and then it was exceedingly beautiful.

Oh, beautiful Christmas Eve! Something stirred in my heart and brought tears to my eyes when the bell began to ring and the soft sweet chime came to me across the snow. I thought of the happy homes that Christmas moon was shining on, of devoted husbands and wives, fond fathers and mothers, merry children home from school, of happy lovers, kindly friends.

I looked up to the skies, and I prayed that Heaven would send some one to love me. Everyone expects a gift at Christmas time, and that was what I asked from Heaven. That was my prayer on Christmas Eve, and my story will tell how it was granted.

I returned to the station just as the hour was striking, and found that the carriage had arrived during my absence. The coachman touched his hat as I came up the platform. There was no other being in sight.

"The carriage for Miss Foster, from Ullamere," he said. And a few minutes later I was on my way to the Hall.

A sudden curve, the ripple of a fountain not yet frozen, the cry of a startled bird, the deep baying of a hound, and we were driving up a fine avenue of chestnut trees. The moon revealed a noble pile of buildings. I see the picture now as I saw it then.

Ullamere was a large handsome residence, built in the Italian style, with pillared porch and balcony and stately wings. A lawn sloped down to the very edge of the lake, and the park lay behind the house. No ruddy light shone from the windows; all was dark and gloomy.

It struck me vaguely, as I stood outside, that the house held a secret. No answer came to the first ring; the second brought an old gray-haired man who opened the door cautiously, it seemed to me. In the large entrance-hall there were no evergreens, no fire-light, no mistletoe bough, only gloom and deep shadow. A small lamp glimmered somewhere in the depths of the hall. I felt chilled.

"Miss Foster," said the butler, "my lady is expecting you. Will you step this way?"

He led the way to the library, where a fire burned in the grate and a lighted lamp stood on the table. As for any sign of Christmas, I might as well have looked for roses in December.

"I will tell Lady Culmore that you are here," he said.

He went away, leaving me alone. What a silent house this was. No sound disturbed it, not even the opening or shutting of a door, and the silence appeared to grow more and more intense.

Presently the door opened and the gray-haired butler announced "Lady Culmore." I heard the rustle of a silken dress; a faint odor, as of heliotrope, was wafted to me. She came in with a graceful movement.

She was beautiful as a queen; and if ever a woman's face told a story, her face did. I read in it power, passion, terrible repression—the outcome of an unnatural life; I read wistfulness and fear.

"You have had a long cold journey, Miss Foster," she said. "It is eight o'clock, and we are just going to take tea. Mrs. Harper shall show you to your room, and then you can join us."

Not to save my life could I have refrained, as I raised my eyes, filled with tears, to her face, from saying:

"This is not much like Christmas."

And if the words had been so many barbed arrows that pierced her heart, she could not have started more. It was as though some long-lost voice had spoken to her.

"It is Christmas Eve," she replied. "I had forgotten it."

"You forgot that it was Christmas Eve?" I cried, wondering to myself what manner of woman this was. "Why," I continued, "the whole world remembers and loves Christmas."

"I loved it once," she remarked.

"And why not now," I asked, without thinking that perhaps my words were abrupt.

"Now?" she answered dully. "Oh, now it is quite different!" She looked confused, as though she hardly knew how to answer me. Then seeing the tears rain down my face, she added, "You must try to be happy. It was kind of you to come. You will find Ullamere a beautiful place, but very dull."

She shuddered as she spoke; and I noticed that her voice was sweet and clear, but sadly deficient in the sweet intonations that speak of hope and love. I believe that I was almost frightened by her.

"You are fatigued with your long journey," she said, seeing that my tears still fell.

"Yes; but it is not that," I replied. "I thought Christmas was so beautiful."

I had read such beautiful stories of Christmas Eve in England—of the holly and mistletoe, and of Christmas decorations. I remembered my prayer at the stile under the snow-fringed trees.

"I have asked for a Christmas gift," I said impulsively.

"What have you asked for?" she inquired.

"I was looking at the blue sky, watching the stars, and I asked that Heaven, as my Christmas gift, might give me some one to love me."

"Some one to love you!" she echoed. Her face flushed, her eyes sparkled, her hands trembled. Ask for a sword to pierce your heart, for a deadly serpent to poison you, for lightning to strike you dead, if you will; but never ask for any one to love you—never for any one whom you can love."

And the next minute she was gone.

A kindly, comely woman, whom I knew afterwards as Mrs. Harper the housekeeper, came to me a few minutes later.

"Will you go to your room, miss?" she asked. "You must be very tired and cold."

We went through long winding passages. Mrs. Harper carried a wax-taper, which made the darkness seem all the more profound. The wind moaned fitfully.

"What a dreary house!" I cried involuntarily. "Why do you not have it lighted?"

"There is no gas nearer than Ulladale," she replied, "and that is quite five miles away. Besides, no one cares about having the place lighted up."

"No one cares?" I repeated. "What an extraordinary thing. I thought every one liked to make a house cheerful."

"All the gas that could be made in the world would not render this house cheerful," said Mrs. Harper. "There is a shadow over it."

"The shadow of what?" I asked, with a pale face and fast-beating heart.

"No one knows. I can see the shadow and feel it, but I cannot tell what it is. You are young, Miss Foster, and you must try to be cheerful. Do not let the gloom oppress you. That is the bell for tea."

I looked at my few plain and simple dresses.

"I am almost ashamed to go down in one of these," I said. "Are there any visitors?"

She laughed a dreary laugh.

"Visitors! No; they seldom ever come here."

"But Lady Culmore was so superbly dressed!" I cried.

The housekeeper looked at me earnestly.

"In all the county," she replied, "there is no one who dresses so magnificently as my lady; but she will never get that which she dresses for—never."

I took out a dress of plain black silk and some holly berries.

"I will not forget it is Christmas, if every one else in the house does!" I cried, as I placed a spray of red-berried holly in my hair and one in the bodice of my dress.

A few minutes afterwards I stood at the drawing-room door with a beating heart. There was a death-like silence within; the wind was wailing outside, the shadows were deepening and gathering around me. I took courage, opened the door, and found myself in a magnificent room, lofty and beautifully decorated. Lady Culmore was seated before the ruddy fire.

"Come in, Miss Foster," she said. "You will be glad to have some tea, I am sure."

A cosy little table was drawn to the fire; a silver tea service, with cups and saucers of Sevres china, was placed on it.

After a short interval, a servant brought in a silver stand and kettle, and placed them on the table.

"Sir Rudolph is coming, my lady," he said.

I had thought her cold and without emotion, but I saw now that I had been mistaken. Her face changed. The peculiar pallor of the lips disappeared, the mask as of stone fell; there was the flushed, passionate, beautiful face of a living, loving woman.

Again the door opened and Sir Rudolph entered. I forgot at first to look at him in the wonder I felt at her. The agony in the eyes of a frightened bird when the snake first fixes it would give a faint idea of the expression in hers; yet in them shone a gleam of love—unutterable, despairing love. But when he spoke I looked at him. He was not a model of manly beauty; but he had a face that once seen, could never be forgotten.

Sir Rudolph held out his hand and bade me welcome to Ullamere. His greeting was a thousand times more kindly than Lady Culmore's had been. He said that he hoped I should not find it dull—that he spent his own time in reading, boating, fishing and rambling over the hills. And all the time he spoke his wife's eyes were fixed on him with the look of a frightened bird.

We sat down, and it ever there was a study, these two, husband and wife, presented one. After the first half-shrinking look, his eyes were carefully averted from her. I could see that plainly. It was not careless indifference; it was that he would not look at her. When he spoke to me, his eyes met mine with a frank open expression. If Lady Culmore addressed him, they were studiously fixed on anything but her.

As tea proceeded, the wonder to me grew greater. When Sir Rudolph addressed his wife, he seemed quite unconscious of the constraint and coldness that came into his voice, as she seemed quite unconscious of the pleading that came into hers.

One little incident impressed me much. Lady Culmore wore a very handsome diamond bracelet; the gold of the setting of one of the stones was slightly damaged and hurt her arm. She raised it suddenly with a little cry of pain and went over to her husband.

"Rudolph," she said, "will you see to this bracelet for me?" And she looked at him with eyes so full of love that my wonder was that he did not embrace her on the spot and kiss the lovely pleading face.

She held out her beautifully-rounded white arm to him and showed him the little red mark caused by the broken gold. In doing so her hand touched him. It was accidental, I believe; but I shall never forget the incident. It was over in a moment; but while that moment lasted, the scene was terrible. His face changed; fierce anger flamed from his eyes. He shook the white hand from him as though it had been a viper.

"You forget!" he cried, in a voice so cold and hard that I recognized it with difficulty; and shuddering, white, trembling, she shrank away from him.

"Good-night, Miss Foster," said Sir Rudolph abruptly. "I hope you will make yourself as happy as you can."

He was gone before I had time to reply.

Lady Culmore stood quite still for a few moments; then she tore the jewels

from her hair, from her neck, from her arms, and dashed them upon the ground.

"And am I so hateful, so horrible," she cried, "that he will not look at me, that I may not touch him?"

Suddenly she remembered my presence, and looked at me with a wild passionate despair that touched my very heart.

I went to pick up the beautiful gems strewn upon the ground. I laid them, a glittering magnificent mass, on the table. She came up to them with a half-shamed face.

"How passionate I am, Miss Forster!" she said. "What can you think of me?"

"Look at my arm," she continued. "If any other man had been in his place, he would have kissed it; and he flung it from him!"

I had no time to answer. The footman came in to clear the table, and I went back to my room.

* * * * * * *

What manner of house, what manner of people were these? What was wrong under this roof? What was the shadow where all should have been bright? I had been tired before, but the mystery and novelty had so excited and bewildered me that I could not rest, I could not sleep. Surely no one had ever spent a stranger Christmas Eve than this!

I went to sleep at last, thinking of the beautiful face of the wife, of the noble face of the husband, wondering what shadow, what sorrow lay between them.

Christmas morning dawned bright and beautiful. I drew near the window and looked out in wonder and delight. There lay the mere, known as Ulla Water, and the grounds of the estate sloped down to the very edge.

In its mantle of white snow, with the sun shining full upon it, the scene was most striking. The robins were flying about in search of food, and the laurustinus was in full flower. My heart and spirits rose. It could not be all misery in such a world as this, such a beautiful world, disfigured only by man and sin!

I went downstairs, thinking that, if Christmas Eve were forgotten, surely, being Christmas, they would remember Christmas day! But again there was no recognition of it—no holly, no mistletoe, no cheery voices, no laughter, no Christmas greeting. The house was as silent in the morning sunshine as it had been on the previous night.

Breakfast was served in the dining-room; but neither Sir Rudolph nor his wife came down to it. The old butler told me that Sir Rudolph's breakfast was served to him in his study, and that her ladyship took hers in her own room.

There was nothing to be done but to make the best of it, to take my breakfast in solitude and dream of the thousand happy homes where, on Christmas morning the long-parted met again, and there was nothing but gladness and love; and, while the sunshine does but deepen the shadow in this gloomy dwelling, I can tell the brief story of my life—how and why I came to Ullamere.

My mother, Mabel Averil, came of a good old family. When not more than seventeen, she ran away with her drawing master, Alic Forster, a young artist who had dreams of making a name and winning fame.

Her family never forgave her, and my father took her to Paris. There he struggled long and arduously. The best engagement he had was as drawing master to the pupils of Madame Dudevant, who had a large and fashionable school in the Champs Elysees.

He died suddenly of fever when I was four years old; and Madame Dudevant, who was a kind-hearted woman, offered my mother a situation as English teacher in her school. My education was to be her recompense—and truly I received a first-class education.

Had I been the daughter of a peeress instead of a poor teacher, she could not have taken greater pains with me. On my life at the Parisian pension I need not dwell. My mother died when I was nearly eighteen; and after that I could never endure the place, it was so full of painful memories to me.

Madame was very good; when I told her how unhappy I felt, she said the best thing would be for me to take a situation in England. She answered an advertisement for a young lady who spoke French, German, and Italian, and was well acquainted with the literature of the three countries.

It was essential that she should also be an excellent musician and a good singer. The salary proposed was most liberal, and a comfortable though exceedingly quiet home was offered.

"You will be very fortunate," said Madame Dudevant to me, "if you secure this."

Very fortunate indeed in a great many respects! The salary was one hundred per annum; the situation was that of companion to Lady Culmore, the wife of Sir Rudolph Culmore of Brooke, residing now at Ullamere, in Lancashire. Madame thought she had some reason for congratulating me, and I was only too delighted to have an opportunity of seeing England, the land I loved.

It was on the twenty-third of December that I left Madame Dudevant, the school, and the gay sunny land of France. I was eighteen that same month. My experience of life was limited to that of a boarding-school.

I had a vague idea that all married people were very happy, never having lived with any. The only men I had seen were the masters who attended the school and the fathers and brothers of the boarders.

So, young and inexperienced, I was plunged into what I felt must be the very heart of a tragedy.

Mrs. Harper came in to say that Lady Culmore was not very well, and would not be downstairs yet for some time, but that, if I liked, I could have the carriage and drive to Uliadale church.

"Will no one else go to church, Mrs. Harper?" I asked.

"No one ever goes to church from here," she said sadly. "You will find this like very few other houses in the world, Miss Forster;" and I felt her words were true.

I told her how glad I should be to attend church. It was pleasant to think of going out into the sunshine amidst the holly and the snow.

I drove home again when service was over, better and brighter for that my first visit to an English church; but, as I drew near Ullamere, the shadow fell over me again.

When I re-entered the house, I found that Sir Rudolph was out, and the butler told me that Lady Culmore wished to see me in her boudoir. The boudoir was a pretty little room leading from the drawing room and looking right over the mere. I went to her at once, feeling more curiosity than I cared to express. I found her very quiet, very sad, and very pale. She held out her hand to me, half clinging to me, as I noticed she clung to any one who was kind to her.

"You have been to church," she said, with a smile. "You found something like Christmas there?"

"A beautiful Christmas," I replied, "just as I had dreamed of it—all holly and laurel and mistletoe. And I love to hear the old Christmas carols."

"I have not been to church for so long, I almost forget what the services are like," she said.

"Do you not think it rather a pity not to go to church?" I ventured to ask. "It does not matter whether our trouble be of body or of mind, there is always comfort there."

"It would be useless for me," she said —"quite useless."

"But why?" I asked.

And her face paled as she answered:

"If man cannot forgive, how can Heaven forgive?"

"It is just the reverse," I answered. "It matters little about man forgiving, if Heaven forgives. But you— Oh, Lady Culmore, what a strange thing for you to say! What can you have done for such pardon to be required?"

They were imprudent words, and, had I stopped to think, I should not have uttered them; but she did not take them amiss. I saw a faint motion of her hands, as though she would fain wring them, and then she turned away.

"Lady Culmore," I said to her presently, "if you have a few minutes to spare, I should like to know what my duties are. Up to the present time I have not done anything for you."

"Your duties," she repeated vaguely—"your duties as a companion to me? It was Sir Rudolph who insisted that I should have a companion. I do not know. He thought I wanted some one to be with me."

"What shall I be able to do to help you?" I asked.

"I hardly know," she replied. "Can you comfort me when I am most miserable?"

"I will do my best," I answered; and she turned from me with a low moan.

"I want comfort," she said—"comfort always."

CHAPTER II.

I COULD not describe the misery of Sir Rudolph's household. What the shadow was that lay over it I was unable to guess. Husband and wife were both young and handsome; they had almost every gift that Heaven could bestow; nothing was wanting, so far as I could see, to complete their happiness; yet they were farther apart, it seemed to me, than if a grave had lain between them—a thousand times farther apart.

That first Christmas day that I spent in England will never die from my memory. We did not see Sir Rudolph until dinner time—seven o'clock; and then it appeared to me that my remonstrance respecting Christmas day had reached the kitchen, for the dinner comprised something in the shape of Christmas fare—a turkey and plum pudding. Some one, in a moment of ill-advised enthusiasm, had placed a pretty little sprig of holly—a few glossy leaves, with a fair sprinkling of red berries—on the top of the latter. Sir Rudolph looked at it, and then turned to the butler.

"What is this?" he asked.

"Holly, Sir Rudolph," he replied.

"And why has it been put there?" he continued.

"I thought—perhaps—Christmas day," he said, stammering.

"Take it away!" commanded Sir Rudolph sternly.

And the butler, with great perturbation of manner and a crimson face, removed the unfortunate sprig of holly.

I read the expression of Sir Rudolph's face, and it said, as plainly as words could speak, "I will have no rejoicing, no outward sign of rejoicing, in this house."

And in such fashion Christmas was celebrated at Ullamere. I watched husband and wife, and I was never so completely puzzled. I could not make out the cause of disagreement at all.

It was no petty feeling that actuated him, that had caused those lines on Sir Rudolph's face; one could see that. Some great deep emotion was at work within him; and at times it almost overpowered him.

Only on Sunday morning did we all take breakfast together; and a most solemn and funeral affair it was. During the week Sir Rudolph and Lady Culmore never met until night, when we dined. He spent the day in study and sport. She—well, it seemed to me that her hours were spent in a fevered dream.

The evenings were perhaps the most dreary part of the life at Ullamere. Sir Rudolph never spent them with us. When dinner was ended, he went to his room, and we saw no more of him.

But one evening—ah, me, what a night that was!—a most terrible storm raged. The snow was all washed away, the rain fell in torrents. It beat against the windows as though it would shatter them. The wind was something appalling in its violence.

We could hardly hear each other speak; trees were torn up by the roots; the doors and windows rattled. Once or twice the great bell in the stable rang without rhythm or measure. The dogs howled, the servants were pale with fear.

As usual, Sir Rudolph rose to quit the dining-room. To my surprise Lady Culmore went up to him. This time she did not touch him; she did not lay her hand upon his arm, but she looked up at him with the most despairing eyes I ever beheld.

"Sir Rudolph," she said—and her voice trembled with the passion of her earnestness—"I pray you, remain with us; I am frightened. Heaven is angry to-night, and I am sorely afraid. Stay with us."

For a moment his eyes flashed fire. Then, looking at the white face, with its quivering lips and frightened eyes, the fire died out, and protoundest pity took its place.

I thought my power added to hers might have effect, and I said:

"The wind and the rain would make any one afraid."

He hesitated half a minute. He did not look at his wife again, but glanced at me.

"Are you really alarmed, Miss Forster?" he asked.

"I should be glad if you would remain," I replied, touched by the wistful entreaty of her eyes.

"Then I will," he replied; and the relief on her face was beautiful to see.

I could not understand why she cared so much for his presence. He never spoke to her nor looked at her, never went near her. If she made a remark to me, he was studiously silent; yet I fancied that he listened with some kind of curiosity to all that she said.

During that evening a feeling of friendship sprang up between Sir Rudolph and myself. He was well-bred, graceful, and accomplished. To me there was a peculiar charm in his manner; there was something more than courtesy, something of chivalry in it.

I liked Sir Rudolph. I could find no fault in him; but I noticed one thing. No matter what we said, no matter how the subject engrossed him, the shade of sorrow and sadness never left his face nor died from his dark eyes.

Something of pity for the estranged wife filled my heart. Surely she must suffer terribly! He was so kind, so gentle in his manner to me—to her so cold, so silent. To me it became so painful at last that I said to myself that anything would be better than for Sir Rudolph to spend his evenings with us.

What was the mystery? Even as he talked to me, over and over again I asked myself this question. I could see no fault in either, nor could I see in either any cause, any reason for the coldness that existed.

It struck ten at last. The storm had abated. Sir Rudolph rose.

"You will not be afraid now," he said, regarding me with a kindly smile. "The wind has fallen, and the rain has ceased."

I looked instinctively at Lady Culmore. His glance followed mine; but the expression of his face changed completely as his eyes rested on her. Then, with a bow, he was gone; and she turned away with an expression of mortal anguish on her face.

* * * * * * *

If Sir Rudolph did not like his wife, why did he not leave her? If she had done him any wrong, why did he not punish her? If there was anything against her of which he knew, why did he not charge her with it? Any mode of life must be better than this.

As the days passed on, I saw no difference. The new year came and was welcomed much as Christmas had been. January, with its ice and snow, came to an end; February, with its faint gleams of sunshine, passed.

But there came an evening in March the very recollection which chills my heart. There was no storm, no tempest of rain, but the wind was blowing as I had never heard it. I loved the wind.

I was not afraid. This was what I liked; and, when I went to my room, instead of going to sleep like a sensible girl, I opened my window the better to hear it, for my very heart and soul rejoiced in it.

Suddenly I heard the sound of footsteps in the corridor. Some one tried the handle of my door gently and cautiously. I did not know fear, but I must confess that at the sound of the handle turning my heart beat fast.

I went to the door and opened it. To my surprise, there stood Lady Culmore, wrapped in a long blue dressing-gown, her fair hair hanging over her shoulders, her face white as death, her eyes full of fear.

"I am disturbing you, Miss Forster," she said; "but I am afraid—oh, so sorely afraid! Will you come with me?"

"Yes, Lady Culmore. But what frightens you?" I asked.

"The wind, the wind!" she replied. "I am sure that every lost soul is abroad to-night and wailing in it. Will you come with me?"

She was trembling from head to foot; great drops of agony stood on her forehead; the hand that held the wax-taper trembled. What was it that made the beautiful face so terrible to see?

"You need not be frightened, Lady Culmore," I said. "The wind is always rough in March. You are afraid of it. I think it beautiful."

"It is not the wind that I hear in my room," she whispered. "Oh, come!"

Without another word, I took the taper from her hand and went with her. When we reached the room where Lady Culmore slept, I found that all the lamps were burning. She laid her hand upon my arm.

"I want you to listen," she said, in a low hoarse whisper. "Listen!"

The dying wail of the wind was followed by a soft tap against the window-glass, so soft, so indistinct, that I could hardly hear it. The sound came again and again, until at last the terrified woman flung herself upon her knees with a cry of anguish.

"I know what it is!" she cried. "You must not let it in! Keep the window closed! Send it away!" And she fell senseless, with her white miserable face upon the ground.

I raised her, laid her upon the couch, and went to the window. The moon shone on the budding trees and on the mere. I saw in a moment that the sound was caused by the tapping of a small spray of ivy against the window-glass.

"Have you sent it away?" she asked, in a hoarse whisper.

"There is nothing to send away, Lady Culmore," I replied.

"Nothing!" she cried. "Are you quite sure? Nothing at all?"

"No. What could there be outside your window?"

I began to wonder if her brain was affected. It was the only possible explanation of her conduct.

The wind had been silent for some few minutes. Then it rose again—the same faint sobbing round the window, a sound as natural as any could be, but evidently full of supernatural dread to her. She sprang to her feet and held up her hand again.

"Listen!" she cried.

"It is nothing, Lady Culmore," I said, speaking firmly, for I thought that perhaps this was but a severe hysterical attack. "It is nothing, Lady Culmore," I repeated. "Do you understand? It is only the wailing of the wind."

"Ah, no!" she said. "That is what it sounds like to you. Do you know what it is in reality? It is the crying of a little child, quite a little child, standing there. Hark! Do you not hear it now?"

There was certainly some faint resemblance to the cry of a child, the wail of an infant in great pain. I should never have thought of it but for her.

"Lady Culmore," I said, "you must listen to reason, you must by calm. This is foolish, hysterical, nervous nonsense! Come with me to the window. Look and listen for yourself."

"I must have dreamt it then," she said.

"What did you dream?" I asked.

"I dreamt that I heard some one tapping at the window, and I woke in a great fright. Then I heard the wailing of a child, a pitiful tiny voice sobbing with the faintest breath, and the sound came from the window. I went there, and threw aside the curtains as you have done now, and I saw—oh, that Heaven would darken my eyes for evermore!—I saw a tiny child standing there, dressed in a little white shroud, and he was rapping with a feeble little hand on the window pane. For a moment the baby eyes flashed into mine, and I knew that if he came in I should fall down dead."

"It was a dream," I said, with a sigh of unutterable relief—"only a dream."

Her face could grow no paler; but her head fell more heavily upon my shoulder.

"So strange!" she murmured. "Ah, so strange!"

"You never had a little child, Lady Culmore, had you?"

"Never," she answered.

"Had you little brothers or sisters?" I asked.

"None," she replied.

"It is an extraordinary thing, never having had anything to do with a little child, that you should be haunted by the cries of one!"

She was looking at me with wild distended eyes.

"Miss Forster, you will not tell this fancy of mine to any one?" she said slowly. "I am so afraid the people should think me mad."

Then she promised to try to be calm, to lie down and sleep, if I would remain with her. I did so, and sat down by her side, holding her hand, until at last she dropped into a fevered restless sleep.

Ah me, how restless! The beautiful head and troubled face turned incessantly from side to side; the lips were never still; and the burden of her cry was, "I did it all for you, love—all for you!" Then came prayers, entreaties, sighs, and tears; but above all rang that one pitiful cry, "All for you, love—all for you!"

In the full morning light I left her fast asleep.

Could it be that the gloom of the house was extending to me? All that day I was miserable. I felt sure that Lady Culmore was very ill, threatened with a severe illness or with insanity. I was sorely perplexed, feeling that it was my duty to get help for her from somewhere, not yet knowing in the least to whom I should apply.

I would not betray her. I would keep the secret of her strange fancies and her terrible nights; but I must have advice of some one as to how she could best be dealt with. The only person I could think of was Mrs. Harper, the housekeeper; and I went one afternoon in search of her.

I asked her to come out with me into the grounds, where I could talk to her at my ease. I told her that I thought Lady Culmore was very ill, and that she required more attention than I could give her. The housekeeper looked sorry and very puzzled.

"I am just as much bewildered as yourself, miss," she said. "This is not like any other household. What lies between those two—husband and wife—I cannot tell, but I fear it is something terrible. They seem to me more like jailor and prisoner than anything else."

"Which is the jailer?" I asked.

"Sir Rudolph," she answered. "I would not stay but that, after all, I like both my master and my lady so well. They seem to me perfection apart, but together they would puzzle the saints."

"Has it always been in this way, Mrs. Harper?"

"Yes. The servants in the house are strangers, except the butler and myself. We lived with Sir Rudolph at Brooke Hall. We were with him at his marriage."

"Was there anything curious connected with it?" I asked.

"Nothing; everyone noticed the intense love of the bridegroom for the bride. I never saw any one so devoted in my life. It was marvellous to see them together. Sir Rudolph brought his bride home to Brooke Hall, and I lived there one year with them. Then, quite suddenly, they came here; and they have lived in this strange fashion ever since."

"And you know nothing of what brought them here—nothing of the cause of their being on such terms with each other?"

"Nothing. Everything was bright and happy at Brooke Hall. The house was filled with guests. I remember even that arrangements had been made for a dance, when Sir Rudolph sent for me suddenly. 'We are going to the Ullamere, Mrs. Harper,' he said. 'Will you come with us? We shall not return to Brooke Hall.'"

"But was there no warning of what was about to happen?"

"None," was the reply. "The only incident which occurred at Brooke was the death of the nurse, Martha Jennings. She died on the morning of Christmas Eve; but that had nothing to do with my master and mistress' leaving home so suddenly. I think, Miss Forster, it will be better for you to speak to Sir Rudolph about my lady. He loved her so dearly once, he must feel anxious if he thinks there is anything the matter with her."

I took Mrs. Harper's advice, and went at once to Sir Rudolph. I found him in the gun room.

"I want to speak to you for a few minutes, Sir Rudolph," I said.

He bowed with the frank courtesy that was his great charm.

"Will you not come in, Miss Forster?" he asked.

"I am too great a coward, Sir Rudolph. I am afraid of the guns."

"I must come to you then," he said laughing; and he joined me where I was standing on the lawn, adding, "I am at your service, Miss Forster."

But all his geniality died away when I told him I wished to speak to him about Lady Culmore. I said that she was very ill, and that I was very uneasy about her. He was a changed man at once—cold, hard, unyielding.

He listened to all I said, and made no answer, except that, if I thought Lady Culmore ill, I could send for a doctor—any doctor I liked. Then his interest ceased.

"Sir Rudolph," I said, "have you—has any one who knows her—any suspicion that Lady Culmore is mad?"

"Mad," he repeated, with infinite scorn —"mad! I wish she was!"

And I was left to find out what those words meant.

CHAPTER III.

THE end of the month of May was near, and during all this time I had not seen one visitor at the hall.

Lady Culmore had steadfastly refused to see a doctor.

"Why should I try to preserve my life?" she said, when I spoke of one. "I had one great hope, but it is dying slowly and surely. When it is quite dead, I shall die too. What is there in life to make me desire it?" she cried passionately. "Christmas snow, March winds, summer flowers, would come and go; I should be eating my heart away."

"But, Lady Culmore," I said, "why should you feel and think in this way? Why need you despair? You are young and beautiful and wealthy; you have a husband who might—— Well, perhaps I had better not speak of that."

"You do not understand," she said. "I made a terrible mistake once in my life—a most terrible mistake. I see it now. He will never forgive nor forget it."

"How did you make it?" I asked.

"Through love of him," she answered. "Can you tell me what it was you did?" I asked.

"No—a thousand times no! The words would scorch my lips. I did not see then as I see now. My sorrow is incurable."

"I am beginning to think that there is no such thing as an incurable sorrow," I said slowly. "We agree that evil deeds, sin, crime, are the greatest sources of sorrow. There is no sin, no crime, so great but that Heaven will pardon it."

"Do you think so, Kate?" She had grown to call me by my Christian name. And the mournful blue eyes sought mine with the first gleam of hope that I had ever seen in them.

"I am sure of it," I replied. "There is no sin so great, no crime so horrible, but that Heaven will pardon, if pardon be asked."

"Pet," she said despairingly, "my husband will never forgive me. Why should he be less pitiful, less merciful than Heaven? If I knelt and prayed to him from sunrise to sunset, he would wave me away with the same cold gesture. Oh, my sin, my sin! It was all for love of him. I would have gone through fire and water for him; and now——"

I looked at her in wonder and amazement. What had she done? What was this sin?

"Kate," she said, "if you loved any one very much—so much that you forgot everything else in the world, so much that you forgot all about right and wrong —and you committed a great sin for the sake of the man you loved, should you not think he would find it easy to forgive?"

"I should think forgiveness would depend entirely on what the sin was, Lady Culmore."

The words seemed to strike her like a blow. She wept silently, bitterly.

And I wondered more than ever what was the mystery of this woman's life.

* * * * * * *

"Miss Forster," said Sir Rudolph one morning, "will you take a message from me to Mrs. Harper? I promised to be at Brenham Woods by eleven o'clock, and it is nine now; so that I have not time to see her myself."

"I will take any message you please, Sir Rudolph," I replied, grieved that he altogether ignored his wife, who was present.

She looked up, with a shadow of deep pain in her eyes.

"Tell Mrs. Harper that I expect my brother, Mr. Ulric Culmore, this evening, and that he will remain a few weeks. I should like the blue rooms to be prepared for him."

The blue rooms were two very charming apartments in the west wing, near to Sir Rudolph's; one was used as a sitting-room, the other as a sleeping-room.

"Ask Mrs. Harper to see that a writing table is placed in the sitting-room," continued Sir Rudolph; "my brother will want to study while he is here."

He bowed and went away. Lady Culmore came up to me, and once more I noticed the excessive whiteness of her hands, the pallor of her face. She clutched, rather than held, my arm.

"Kate," she cried, in a low terrified whisper, "Kate, what does this mean?"

"I do not understand you, Lady Culmore," I said.

"Why is he coming, of all the people in the world? Ulric Culmore—why is he coming? I—I am sore afraid."

"Afraid of what?" I asked. "Surely not of Sir Rudolph's brother?"

"Yes, of him," she said. "What is he coming for?"

"To see Sir Rudolph, and to rest most probably," I said.

"Do you think so?" she cried eagerly. "Do you see nothing else in it?"

"What else could there be?" I asked.

"He is a lawyer, and very clever," she said.

"That has nothing to do with it," I answered, laughing.

But she continued to tremble, and I left her to attend to Sir Rudolph's orders.

"Mr. Ulric Culmore coming!" said the housekeeper. "I am glad!"

"Do you know him?" I asked.

"Yes, miss. He came to Brooke Hall while I was there, and I liked him very much. I am glad he is coming. He will be sure to bring some kind of change to this miserable house."

"Then he has never been to Ullamere?" I asked.

"No," she replied. "The last time he came to Brooke was to attend the funeral."

A funeral is an every-day matter, and it did not occur to me to ask whose it was.

On the evening of the twenty-seventh of May I went out for a short stroll through the grounds. Dinner was delayed until half past eight, on account of Ulric Culmore's expected arrival. I wandered down to the lake-side, and stood there watching the gold of the laburnum, the blue of the lake, the rippling green foliage, the brown distant hills, until I was lost in admiration.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Bric-a-Brac.

RAIN SIGNS.—Tulips and dandelions close up before rain. If it rains when the sun shines it will rain the next day. A piece of seaweed hung up will become damp previous to rain. When the walls are more than usually damp rain may be expected. Unusual clearness in the atmosphere, objects being seen very distinctly, indicates rain. When the sun appears of a light, pale color, or goes down in a bank of clouds, it indicates the approach or continuance of bad weather.

SOLOMON'S JUDGMENT.—A parallel to Solomon's Judgment occurs in the Gesta Romanorum, an old book of monkish stories. Three youths to decide a question are desired by their referee, the King of Jerusalem, to shoot at their father's dead body. One only refuses; and to him, as the rightful heir, the legacy is awarded. A similar story is told as occurring in the kingdom of Pegu; one woman's child was carried away by an alligator; she and another mother claim a child; they are desired to pull for it; the infant cries, and one instantly quits her hold, and the judge awards the child to her. The former incident was frequently quoted in the pulpit.

GONE TO THE DOGS.—A well-known bishop who recently attended the Synod of the Canadian church at Winnipeg, tells this story: "There was a missionary bishop there," says he, "who had been six weeks in coming, most of the way by canoe. He rose and began by saying that he would speak for himself and for a brother bishop, who, unfortunately could not be present. He was sorry to say that his brother's diocese had gone to the dogs. A general gloom followed these words. He then went on to say that the bishop had found so many inquirers after religion among the Eskimo north of the Hudson Bay that he had to build a church. As there was no wood, he used whales' ribs and rafters, covering them with walrus hide, and so made a church to hold eighty persons. 'All went merry as a marriage bell' for a time—the dogs grew famished and ate the church."

SPIDERS.—Spiders have played a greater part in history than most people are aware of. Everybody knows how the perservance of a spider encouraged Robert Bruce to regain his kingdom of Scotland, but not so many know that, according to Jewish tradition, a spider saved David's life. Saul was hunting for him, and his soldiers approached a cave where David had hidden. Shortly before, however, a spider had spun her web at the mouth of the cave, and the soldiers, taking it for granted that, if he had taken refuge in the cave he must have broken the web, departed, forgetting the web might have been spun after as well as before his entrance. A spider saved the life of the grand-uncle of the German Emperor. Frederick William was King of Prussia, and an attempt was made to poison him in a cup of chocolate. By chance a spider fell into the cup, and for this reason the monarch gave the chocalace to a dog, who immediately died. Inquiry was made with the result that the cook was hanged, and a large spider, wrought in gold, now decorates one of the chief rooms of the Winsor Palace at Potsdam in memory of the king's escape.

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The Ladies' Home Journal
Philadelphia

THE PASSED AWAY.

BY L. L.

Oh, little empty nests,
Where are the downy breasts
That o'er you hovered?
Where the sheltering wings;
And where the tender things
They safely covered?

Hocked by the summer breeze,
High in the orchard trees,
Whate'er the weather,
The robin and his mate,
Sang early and sang late,
Fast toiled together,

To feed the hungry brood,
Who for their daily food
All helpless waited.
Now song and work are done,
The nestlings, every one,
Have flown and mated!

Oh, lonely homes of men,
From which the loved have been
By Death's hand taken—
Oh, loving hearts, that yearn
For those who ne'er return,
To hearths forsaken—

Think, as the robin's flight
Takes him where skies are bright,
And woodland vernal;
They, too, live 'neath the skies
Where summer never dies—
In homes eternal.

NEVER AGAIN.

BY Y. T.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

ONE day, when the others had made arrangements for going on a long coaching expedition to some neighbors, he asked her if she felt equal to a walk to a distant point. She assented readily, and they started.

It was wet at first and the wind blew steadily in their faces. Now and then the vapors rolled away from the wild, bare hills, revealing here and there a distant purple peak.

Little clusters of delicate larch birch waved their shadowy arms in the wind, their silver stems gleaming ghostly in the mist. The mountains closed in behind and opened out before them. Once when they came to a rougher piece of walking than usual, he held out his hand to steady her as she jumped from rock to rock in the boggy moor.

He held hers for a second or so after she was again on firm land. She raised her eyes unconcernedly to his, and what she saw there gave her a quick shock. A thrill shot from his fingers to hers as they lay passive in his hand. Until that moment no personal thought had entered her mind. They had simply talked as friends.

They walked on a few paces in silence, and when next they spoke all seemed different. Something had removed itself. They talked more of themselves, less of general things. Perhaps the calm which lurks in all lonely places, among all desolate hills, descended upon them as they advanced up the glen; the grand beauty of one of Scotland's loveliest haunts entering into their hearts with a sense of abiding peace, enabling them to talk with a freedom from constraint which they would never have dared to indulge in between four walls.

This was a proof of his magnetic influence over her that, amid all their soul-stirring beauty, her thoughts had never reverted to the past and the heart-break it contained.

"I often think how happy one might be," he began, "if only one could take the days as they come, forgetting the things which are past—looking neither forward nor back!"

"In fact, if the past were as though it were not, and the future hidden." Her voice broke, and she looked away.

Quite suddenly, he said, glancing at her sideway, "Don't you think the past may be sometimes as though it were not? Don't you think it admissable to enjoy the good the gods send without troubling whither it leads?"

"I don't think I quite understand your meaning."

"Take an instance I have in my mind. Say, for the sake of argument, a man makes a mess of his life. Certain results remain. Is he to carry the thought of it into every moment of his future? May he not lay it aside now and again—if he meets a wayfarer like himself, storm-bound, storm-beaten?

"May not they two be to one another as much, for the time being, as either wishes; comfort each other, hearten each other for the remainder of the long pilgrimage when each will be struggling on alone again?" A shadow crept into her face.

"Do you mean that, if a man, or woman, has some unbreakable tie, he, or she, is at liberty to love another, for that is what it really comes to?"

He flushed scarlet all over his swarthy skin. "I did not say that! But all the same, a man may love a woman truly and well, though earlier circumstances—things which happened before ever they two met—prevent his ever being more to her than a friend."

"I daresay," she answered, indifferently, "men are very strange, and I, for one, should never understand them." She felt angry, discomposed, she did not know why.

At last she broke out, "And I don't believe you think so either! The better a man loves a woman—men such as you, I mean—" again he flushed hotly, "the less wrong they would do her, and it is a wrong—a great wrong—to lower our estimation of your sex, in whatever subtle manner you do it. For after all—this world is not the end; things may be straighter in the next. There is a verse I always like—do you know it?

. . the quiet heavens seem to say, consoling.
Only Endure!
They shall see God, who, bearing and believing,
Keep their hearts pure:
Some stony steps, and yet a little climbing,
The rest is sure."

"'Keep their hearts pure' for God—and for her (or him!) That verse has often confronted me."

He answered nothing to this, but his furtive glance was often seeking her face, as they slowly walked on together in silence.

Up past the quaint little churchyard—so small, so empty—filled only with the graves of the crofters of those desolate regions, and there they stood, looking at the grassy mounds and over the wide, smooth loch, to the mountains lying dim and shadowy beyond:

They were on their homeward way, and the day was on the wane. He stood gazing into her eyes with a curiously eager expression in his own. In the morning she was leaving. Would they ever meet again?

She shivered, and pulled herself together. She felt instinctively attracted to this silent, reserved man—as, also, she knew he was to her—in that strange, mysterious hour where daylight and evening blend. She wondered what his thoughts were at that moment, and fancied that she partly guessed—was he not for one thing, wondering what had given her the manner of one so much older than herself? For her part she felt a deep rest, a gladness, a peace. He had roused her from her deathly apathy that was fast turning her into stone.

He went a step closer. He was about to speak. She looked up—again that thrill running through all her veins like fire. His eyes held hers, but his lips were still. How can eyes have that power, she asked herself?

One looks, and eyes say nothing, and again, those same eyes speak of things unspeakable—talk a language over which our tongues falter and fail. Is it not that eyes do not lie because they do not bind us? No one can hold us accountable for all the piteous, the cruel, the passionate things they say.

She felt her own dilating with wonder, with awe, and a strange incredulity. Was the same old drama being enacted over again and she had not known? Was it possible—for her?

Or was not the old wound too fresh, the old memories too vivid yet for her to dream such dreams—for years to come, if indeed it should ever again be possible? And yet—such things had been, ere this!

It seemed to her, as they stood there under the wuthering pines on the hillside, that now he was suddenly realizing for the first time, the narrow line of time that divided the now from the then—how near was the moment approaching that would turn the present into the past.

She began, herself, to realize how much he was to her—how his companionship had brought her back from the abyss of despair to the light of day, to hope, and the old belief in man's goodness.

Then, with an exclamation of annoyance, he cried, "How stupid I am! The post came in just as I was leaving the house, and I promised to give you this letter. Can you forgive me for forgetting it till this moment?"

Indifferently, she took the square envelope from him. But when her eyes fell on the writing which she had not seen for so many months, the color forsook her lips, and her hand shook. The man, watching, saw it. Like all Aubrey's letters, this one was short, and had no conventional beginning or ending.

"Where are you? How are you? I have tried not to think of you, not to write to you. It is no use. A consuming fire devours me for some sign from you. But I know you will never write again. Must it be so? Can we not be as we were before that cruel winter? Oh, what demon is it that tears me like this!" That was all.

A wild frenzy of joy seized her, unlike anything she had ever before experienced, even when with him, and feeling his presence in every nerve of her body. Forgetful of the man beside her she raised her eyes and her lips moved, God was very near her then—she was alone with Him.

Though to her it seemed an age, in reality it was not many moments before this exaltation passed, and she knew what she must do. She could not endure the shame a second time. It could mean nothing else.

His strength pitted against hers. Ah, it was cruel! But had it not always been so? What was he if not cruel? It was his nature; bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and he could no more help it than she could help being weak. But, oh, it was hard! Just as she was beginning to forget and to build up for herself other interests.

For a long while she stood there silent. Then, as she turned listlessly to go back, the man stretched out his hand impulsively, and caught hers.

"Of course I don't know—I don't want to know—what was in that letter. But I can read your face well enough by now to know that it was something hard to bear.

"You are a brave woman, and we all have our secret troubles. Let me hear, and now, thank you for your friendship, for your sympathy. You have made my burdens lighter, would I could lighten yours."

She pressed his hand, her heart was too full for speech—well understanding the almost feminine tact which had prompted these words—the only sort of comfort that she could have stood just then. The next minute they turned towards the house.

* * * * * *

Later in autumn she was staying with some friends on the Argyllshire coast.

October has its lovely days, and this was one of them. The sun brilliant, the wind cool, as the yacht sped down the Sound, the tide with them, and the blue hills of the island rising and fading as they went past.

On Shumack pier they picked up some friends who were to join them for the day's cruise, and among this little group, as they came on deck, Peewit noticed, with a glance of mutual recognition, her friend, Mr. Duncan; and something told her that it was no chance meeting.

They shook hands and talked with the rest, their eyes meanwhile, engrossed with the changing beauties of the sea and land, as they flew along over the dancing waves.

Amid those same scenes Ossian's heroes lived and loved, fought and died. On these wild shores wandered the fair maids with cloudy hair and white faces, watching from the lonely heights for the return of their brothers and husbands from the chase and from the war—their shabby dog friends at their heels—in the purple shadows of evening.

On their starboard lay the hills of Turs; fading over their brows were the dimly-mysterious heights of Scarba, in whose glens and corries dwelt the wild-eyed stag, the joy of the sportsman.

A few storehouses scattered over the low shores, constituted the village.

Anchoring in the little bay, sheltered from every wind, the gig was lowered, and carried them all to the rugged shore, to the slippery stone pier landing built out into the water.

Some of the party went up the hill to the house—Duncan and Peewit loitering among the rocks, waiting for the signal which should tell them that their neighbors were at home.

Then for the first time that day, fixing her gaze on his face, she noticed how white and ill he was looking. His eyes seemed brighter and darker than usual. He was very quiet as they wandered over the little strip of silver sand, or stood gazing across at the yacht anchored in the sunny waters.

He stooped over a great flat stone on the sand.

"If years hence, you ever come here again, I want you to think of me. I am going to scratch my name here—cockney-fashion—and yours under it, if I may," with a short laugh, glancing up into the face above him and suiting the action to the word.

A short pause, and then he murmured, under his breath "Peewit." No more. Not any surname. And as the single word fell from his lips it mingled with the monotonous boom of the waves in the silence.

A white signal fluttered from above. Warm welcome awaited them in the house upon the hill, and a luxurious tea was spread upon the snowiest of cloths in the dim old antlered hall, decorated with the hunting-spoils of countless generations.

A lazy saunter through the little suntrap of a garden afterwards disclosed marvels of flowering beauty.

Hedges of faint blue veronicas; trees of graceful fuchsia, whose heads were as big as oranges; masses of sweet verbena, whose exquisite lemon perfume mingled with a smell of the briny breezes blowing up straight from the ocean; cherry-pie dark as the purple shadows fast shrouding the hills of Islay lying in the shade, and sweet as the breath of the shaggy Highland cattle wending their way down to the shore, from among the ragged tufts of sea-drift and drying heather on the hillside.

Then up anchor and away in the evening shades. The sun sank over the Western island, the deep purple line of which meets the purple of the sea-line.

A solitary heron stood on one long-jointed leg, diligently fishing for his evening meal.

One by one her companions retired below for warmth, as the chill of the evening mists crept over the sea. Peewit preferring fresh air, remained on deck. Black clouds, barred by a perfect rainbow are loured over the pale gold of the sunset sky.

A brilliant shaft of flame shot up this black mass, and died out. The grey shadows stole over the shivering water.

A storm was upon them. She sat alone on deck, except for the crew in the bows, listening to the great drops hissing past in the green waves. The wind was keen, but amid her furs and rugs she enjoyed the sting of it in her face, and she was thinking.

A step sounded behind her. A tall figure loomed up from below, and advanced to sit in silence at her side. A spasm of shivering seized her, for she knew that the hour was come.

The storm passed, and the stars shone out in fitful gleams, making faint glimmerous tracks across the water. She can see the white of his face against the dark background of night.

The silence for some minutes was unbroken except for the throb of the wheel, the churn of the water foaming past the yacht's side in the dusk, and the moan of the wind in the rigging. The absolute solitude and loneliness of the sea and sky and land occupied the mind like a great ache.

He began at last: "Have you enjoyed to-day? I fear you are tired. I think it has been the longest day of my life—and it is not over yet."

She turned towards him and saw that he was not looking at her but over to the land, behind which lingered yet a pale strip of daylight.

Though this speech might have been taken objection to on the score of its being but doubtfully complimentary, she knew what he meant, and waited.

He went on. "For ever, to-day will stand as a day apart. To-day there is something to be done—something to be said—and you will help me." He sat, rigid, immovable. "I once said to you that sometimes a young man makes a mess of life. I have done so."

His words came disjointedly, his meaning was hardly clear. She wonders, did he think he owed her an apology for the past? Surely not, for that would be too honorable.

She started up from her lounging position. "Mr. Duncan, do not say anything for which you may be sorry afterwards. Do not. If you have made a mess of your life, what is that to me?"

Perhaps her words sounded more cruel out there in the dark than if he could have seen her face, anyhow he cried quickly, "Stop till I have told all. No one can be more humble than I—but, well you see I have to suffer—so be lenient for this one hour and hear me out."

His voice dropped, and a great pity seized her. What had he to say?

"Some years ago I was much thrown with a girl. I grew fond of her. There was a tacit understanding between us that we were to be engaged soon as I had sufficient to justify it. Well, I got on in my profession and began to think about a definite engagement with her and was

tolerably happy in the contemplation of it. But gradually doubts rose up. I began to wonder what I once had seen in her. Then—I met you."

A long pause followed his quiet words, during which he never moved. Up from below rose a woman's voice, the light touch of a woman's fingers upon a guitar. A momentary cessation, a hum of voices, and she recommenced. Her voice floated up in song from the lighted cabin to where they two sat in the night, and the wind, together, and so far!

"And that cured me of every lingering feeling I had for her. You became the one crying necessity of my life. I hoped it might pass. I tried to keep away from you, but at times the longing to see you again became intolerable, and when at last the opportunity presented itself, I eagerly embraced it. Every word you ever spoke remains in my mind.

"Sometimes I have fancied that you hated me, and there was always something about you which forbade my hoping greatly that I should ever have the power to make you care for me, though occasionally you were friendly enough; but then again, your condescending manner—as it seemed to me—almost turned my infatuation into hatred.

"I felt, I knew, that there had been a power and a sorrow in your life which was an effectual bar to your heart. This knowledge maddened me, while yet it grieved me to think that the common lot of humanity had fallen to you also."

She turned in the dark, half reaching out her hand to him in sympathy, only to withdraw it again before he was aware of her intention. And the music mingled with the throb of the paddle, the moan of the wind.

The white gulls wheeled and swooped overhead, their shrill split cry falling monotonously through the dark sky.

"At last, the longing to hear your opinion on the trouble that was consuming me, took possession of me. I tried to get you to say how you would view a man's conduct who broke his engagement because he had grown to care for someone else too much.

"But you were enviously reticent—so much so that I began to wonder if you guessed my secret. And I gathered that a man who did such a thing would fall in your esteem beyond hope and pardon.

"Then I grew frightened at myself, at my future. While fearing to stake in your good opinion I craved the more blindly for a word, a look that should be warmer than that accorded to friendship.

A wilder gust of wind than usual lifted a corner of one of her wraps, flinging it violently in her face. The gulls swooped lower; the wind shrieked through the rigging above. He leaned forward hastily to rearrange her wrap, hesitated—then resumed his seat, his next words sounding hoarse and strained.

"Then your manner seemed to me to alter. I feared that, in some way, I had effectually annoyed you at last. I was savage, mad. You were further away than ever. I longed for you, craved to hold you just once in my arms—once, it wasn't much."

His words hurt her, they were so very sad. She wondered why she felt as though it were all a dream; suddenly she lifted her eyes to his, and smiled, laying her hand softly on his knee.

And then something broke loose in him; his restraint gave way. A quick fear seized her for what she had accomplished by that simple touch. He leaned towards her, his eyes shining like stars in the faint light. She shuddered and drew away. A gasp which was almost a sob burst from her straining throat. His arm encircled her, his thin cheek was pressed against hers.

The whole soul of the man seemed to leap from him to her. He muttered brokenly:—

"Oh, God, must it be! When I love her so?"

He seemed instinctively to guess what her answer would be. She felt his heart beating, and her own contracted with a great pity for him. She knew what he was suffering; this strange, reserved man, but she knew also, that after this night he would go back and take up his life and his duties like a man, and tonight would be to him as a dream. And she? Her tears, as they ran down her cheeks, fell on his, mingling with the spray dashing in over the side on to them.

His passionate cry died away. She murmured softly to him, and to herself.

"It is Mrs. Oliphant who says 'In all human aches and miseries, to be understood, is the one comfort above all others.'" And he knew that she understood all that he would say but couldn't. But who would understand her? Did she even understand herself?

* * * * * *

The bell rang—he loosened his arms; the paddle ceased its throb. The lights from the old tower streamed broadly over the waters of the little lock. The last sad words of the song sounded up from below—in yearning sweetness they floated away into the wild night.

One evening, a few days later, as Peewit was going for a saunter before dinner, two letters were put into her hand. One glance at the envelopes made her quicken her steps till she reached a quiet, lonely spot, overlooking the sea; and there she opened them.

The first ran thus:—

"Just one line. I cannot write more. To tell you that I have fulfilled my obligations, and our marriage is to be in the new year. Please do not write and congratulate me."

The other was not much longer. It was from Aubrey.

"Peewit, have you forgiven me? I want your forgiveness now. I am going to be married. Oh, Peewit, it only you had been stronger! Now it is too late. I hope that we may never meet again. Your face haunts me. You are ever in my thoughts; but I know now that you have forgotten me, and it is I who am so weak, you who are so strong—strong enough to tear from your heart a love that was unworthy. Good-bye, my little sweet!"

Enigmatical to the last, as his veiled, mysterious eyes! And the wan gray shadows came softly down the mountain sides and wrapped themselves about Peewit.

Her namesakes, far and near, were calling to one another with their plaintive human voices among the distant hills. The cry of the gorse cock rang harsh and shrill over the moorland wild. And still Peewit never moved.

In the bloom of the distant waves upon the shores somewhere far off and faint, she heard voices that in her ears would never sound again.

The strong arm to fight life's battle, the human love to rest on—were not for her. Never again would she look into eyes that she loved, or rest her tired head against a heart that beat for her alone.

Never—the heart in her own breast fluttered wildly for an instant, sending the red blood flying over her face and neck in hot waves, to leave her pale as sea-foam the next minute—never for her would sound the music of baby voices, nor her hand feel the clasp of tiny fingers!

But there stretched before her instead, long and lonely, the infinite future of work, of life—of Eternity!

Nellie's Predicament.

BY SYBIL.

MANY years ago I spent the summer with my favorite brother, who had recently married, and was settled with his wife in a charming house in a country village.

During the summer I met with a very amusing adventure; and from it I date the beginning of my life's great happiness.

One lovely day in July, I went down to breakfast full of pleasurable anticipations of a picnic to which we had been invited by some friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fordyce. Those invited were to meet at the appointed place at 1 o'clock, and after spending the afternoon in the woods, we were all to adjourn to Hazel Manor for "high tea," to be followed by a carpet hop.

I was talking to my sister-in-law, Ethel, who was making the tea, when my brother came into the room with a rueful look on his face, and exclaimed:

"I say, Ethel, here's a pretty go! Juno has got such a cold that Thompson says he does not dare take her out to-day."

"What a nuisance," cried Ethel. "What are we to do? Could we borrow a horse anywhere, do you think?"

"No chance of that, dear. Everyone wants their own horses to-day. I am afraid we shall have to give up the picnic."

Suddenly a bright notion occurred to me, which I promptly put into words.

"Why not take Ethel's pony carriage?"

"Ethel's pony carriage!" exclaimed my brother. "My dear Nellie, you must have taken leave of your senses! How are three of us to crowd into that?"

"There is Tim's seat. That will do for one of us," I replied.

"Which of us?" laughed Charlie. "I beg to remark that I decline in toto to occupy Tim's seat."

"But I can sit there," I answered.

"Really," quoth Ethel, "I think it is not a bad idea at all. I do not see why we should not take the pony carriage, it Nellie does not mind Tim's seat. I'm only afraid that you will not be so comfortable as I could wish, dear Nellie."

"Are you quite sure you don't mind?" asked Charlie.

"Quite sure," I replied. "Indeed, I think it will be much nicer than that great wagonette, for in it we can drive through the pretty lanes which are too narrow for a larger carriage."

"All right," said Charlie. "If you are pleased, I am. I will just run round to the stables and tell Tompson to have Punch and Judy ready, and then let's have breakfast."

In due time Ethel's pony carriage came round. It was a pretty, light vehicle, drawn by a lovely pair of ponies, and had been given to Ethel by her father when she married.

At the back was a little seat, movable at pleasure, which, as a rule, was only used when Ethel took the little page with her.

It certainly was rather tiny, but I was a small person, and so it did very well for me; and when we were fairly started we all agreed that it was much pleasanter to be able to dispense with the attendance of servants.

We had the most delightful day. Never was a more perfectly assorted party of people than were present at that picnic. There was not a single contretemps, nothing to interfere with our pleasure, and we all enjoyed ourselves most thoroughly.

By no means the least agreeable part of our jaunt was the homeward drive. We started soon after ten o'clock, as we had several miles to drive. There was only a young moon, but the night was cloudless, and the stars so bright that it was not dark.

The stillness of the summer night was broken by the sound of a horse's trot. It came on quickly, and just passed me. Then, attracted, I suppose, by my white dress, the rider wheeled round, and came up to me.

"Miss Graham!" he uttered, in a voice of intense surprise. "All alone here! What has happened?"

The speaker was a great friend of my brother's, and the vicar of an adjacent village. I had been introduced to him that day at the picnic, and—shall I confess it?—he was a prominent object in the pleasant thoughts to which I have alluded.

I told him what had happened, and we had a hearty laugh over my predicament.

"What have you done with Tim's seat?" asked Mr. Franklin, as soon as he could speak.

"Oh, I left that in the ditch," I said. "I daresay it will be found there to-morrow."

What a pleasant walk that was! I never enjoyed one more, and I was almost sorry when, about two miles from home, we met Charlie coming back in the pony carriage to look for me.

Man-like, as soon as he saw that I was safe, he vented his previous anxiety upon me by scolding me rather crossly for not calling out to draw his attention to my position.

"But I could not scream, Charlie," I said, "I was laughing so heartily!"

Then, as the whole absurdity of the affair presented itself to me afresh, I laughed merrily, Charlie and Mr. Franklin roaring in company.

Mr. Franklin helped me into the carriage, and having said good night, turned back to go to his own home, having gone out of his way to walk with me.

When Punch and Judy found their heads turned homewards they went like the wind, and soon I was safe in Ethel's pretty drawing room, recounting my adventure for her edification.

We had only just finished breakfast the next morning, when Mr. Franklin made his appearance to inquire if I was any the worse for the accident; and after that he was forever finding some excuse for calling upon us.

Charlie was rather surprised at this, but Ethel understood it all, and when he was announced, would look at me in a roguish way that made me feel hot.

Then came a day when words were spoken that made me feel myself the happiest woman on earth. Charlie and Ethel were in the garden, and I was all alone in the drawing room when Mr. Franklin came.

I do not remember what he said, but in a moment I found myself folded in his arms, while I wept happy tears on his breast.

Before another summer came round, I was installed in the pretty vicarage of Ancombe as its mistress. Many a time have my husband and I laughed over the results of my eventful drive in Ethel's pony carriage.

Our children delight in hearing the story. The pretty lane in which Tim's seat deposited me is a favorite haunt of theirs. Any question of "Where shall we walk to-day?" is apt to be answered in chorus, "To the lane where papa found mamma. It is so pretty and so nice."

A sentiment echoed in the mother's heart for "auld lang syne!"

PREACHING IN ANCIENT TIMES.—The church historians report that public worship in the first centuries of Christianity was extremely simple. The places of assembling were the private houses of those who had embraced the Christian doctrine, the streets or the fields.

During times of persecution the converts met in secret places. Preaching was not confined to the Sabbath, but meetings were held upon festival days and special seasons. In the first centuries it was usual for the preacher to sit and the people to stand during the delivery of a sermon, customs which have been reversed in modern times.

In some of the early churches it was the practice for both the preacher and hearer to sit in sermon time. The sermons of the Christian fathers were almost universally short; many that have come down to us only occupy ten or twelve printed pages and might have been pronounced with ease in fifteen or twenty minutes.

Very few discourses of the earliest Christian preachers require as much as an hour's time in their delivery. These discourses did not always have texts; the preacher only treated of such matters as seemed to call for remark.

It was no uncommon thing to have two, or even three sermons before the same assembly. The discourses were free and familiar in their style, and the preachers allowed themselves great latitude in making their expositions of the Scriptures.

The early sermons that have been preserved are rich in thought, and have a warmth and glow rarely known to our own times—they are wanting in unity and argumentative force—and indicate that the first preachers had but little regard for exact method.

Only in rare instances did the preacher read from a manuscript; discourses were sometimes composed and committed to memory; but commonly the speaker relied upon suggestions of the moment. The discourses that have come down to us from these times, were not preserved by the original manuscripts from the preachers, but by means of short-hand writers, who exercised much skill in taking down entire discourses at the time of their delivery.

They were often revised by the preachers, and preserved with great care. The style of these old preachers would be considered too florid in modern times, but in point of eloquence some of the early preachers challenge our admiration. Fenelon observes that, after the Scriptures, the knowledge of the fathers will help a preacher to compose good sermons.

WHERE ROSES BREATHED.

Young love once lived in a humble shed,
Where roses breathing,
And woodbines wreathing
Around the lattice their tendrils spread,
As wild and sweet as the life he led
His garden flourished,
For young hope nourished
The infant buds with beams and showers;
But lips, though blooming, must still be fed,
And not even Love can live on flowers.

Alas! that Poverty's evil eye
Should e'er come hither,
Such sweet to wither!
The flowers laid down their heads to die,
And Hope fell sick as the witch drew nigh.
She came one morning,
Ere Love had warning,
And raised the latch, where the young god lay;
"Oh, oh!" said Love, "Is it you? good-bye!"
So he op'd the casement and flew away!

Cousin Charles.

BY M. B.

WE were at opposite ends of the boat, which was moored to the bank, in the shade. I sat on the cushioned seat, apparently deeply engrossed in a book, he was stretched lazily in the bows, with his hat, a particularly old and battered one over his eyes, to all appearances in a calm sleep.

Asleep! Was not that fact sufficient in itself to prove that he did not care for me? For what lover worthy of the name would choose to waste the precious moments of his loved one's society in oblivion? No—he did not love me; and, as I sat there, turning over the leaves of my book without reading a single word, the fact grew more clear and more bitter every moment, and I felt a pain at my heart that was as keen as any physical pain I had ever experienced.

Sir Charles Glenville and I were cousins. He was the owner of the Grove and had an income of about five thousand dollars a year; and I was mistress of Berrylands, and my income was ten times the amount of his. He was tall, fair, handsome, and also a first-rate sportsman and an accomplished flirt; while I was short, dark, plain, and totally devoid of the graces that have power to enslave the wary masculine heart. Yet I know that my cousin wanted to marry me. He coveted my houses and lands, and in order to gain possession of them, was willing to take me as well, and put up with my plain face, short temper, four-and-twenty years.

And was I willing to marry him? Willing was not the word! I would have given everything in the world to be his slave, to attend him everywhere, and do his bidding, receiving a kind word occasionally for my devotion. But, as I did not happen to be his slave, but a free woman, with a good deal of pride and plenty of temper, I determined that, rather than marry a man who saw no charm in me, and was attracted only by my money, I would live and die a spinster, and bequeath Berrylands to some deserving charity.

It was unfortunate for me that the Grove and Berrylands were not more than five miles apart, and that my cousin Charles had got into the habit of riding over to luncheon nearly every day, and of lounging away his afternoons with me, alone, for it was very seldom that aunt Morton was present.

It was unfortunate for me, I say, because one glimpse of my cousin's handsome face, one of his quick, keen glances into my eyes caused me many wakeful hours and demolished all my resolutions. For months our destinies had hung in the balance; one unguarded word from me would have brought him to the point, and I should have been obliged, in spite of the pleading of my own heart, to send him away. It was a hard thing to do; but it was better than slavishly accepting the offer, and feeling afterwards that I had sold myself to one who cared very little for me.

I had delayed the evil moment. I had been guarded in every word and look. I had never given him the slightest opportunity, and yet I almost wished the opportunity had come, that the strain might have been relaxed and my mind set at peace.

But, as I sat there toying with my parasol and pretending to read, a new feeling had taken possession of me—a feeling of resentment against all he was making me suffer, a longing to rouse him from the condition of self-satisfied conceit which rendered him impervious to my sarcasms.

I would bring him to the point, listen politely to his tame avowals of love, and then, turning upon him with some brief but biting sarcasm, which would show him how deeply I scorned him, I would leave him overwhelmed with shame and confusion. It was not a very noble determination, but I was in a disagreeable mood that morning, and had been worked up to such a pitch of nervous excitement that I could find vent for my feelings only in engaging in direct battle with the enemy.

I glanced at him. As he lay there, he looked so comfortable and peaceful that it seemed almost cruel to disturb him. And yet were not, those his eyes—his bright eyes—fixed upon me from beneath the shelter of the battered hat? I looked again. Yes, he was certainly gazing at me, and with a very critical expression. How provoking, when I had thought him asleep and myself as good as alone! However, the best thing to do was to seize the opportunity and carry out my plan at once.

"I'm glad to see you are awake at last," I said, "for I have been wanting the last half-hour to consult you on a very important matter."

"My dear Harriet, it is too hot for important matters!" he replied, closing his eyes with a degree of langour that was almost touching.

"I am sorry you feel the heat so severely," I replied politely; "and of course I shall not now think of troubling you with my affairs. It was only a matter of business."

I felt sure the word "business" would rouse him; for of course anything to do with the management of my estate was of vital importance to him. If he was interested however, he managed to hide the interest he felt under good-humored banter.

"It is the duty of a man," he said in a very serious tone, "in all conditions and circumstances, and be the temperature what it may, to place himself entirely at the service of the lady at whose feet he has the honor of lying. That being the case, I place myself in your hands. Deal with me as you will; but be merciful."

"How dreadfully affected you men are!" I exclaimed scornfully. "You assume an air of exhaustion directly the sun comes out, and think yourselves injured if any one wants you to do anything but lie on your backs and sleep! Surely if I am upriest you can!"

"You must remember," he replied, closing his eyes languidly, "that I belong to the weaker sex. It would be cruel to expect me to exhibit the strength of mind which you possess."

I disdained to reply, sitting in scornful silence. Charles moved into a still more comfortable position, and, evidently thinking he had fully justified his conduct in my eyes, prepared for further slumber.

I was justly indignant at his indifference to me and my affairs, and, closing my parasol with an air of decision, I took up the boat-hook and drew the boat in to the bank. The movement roused the slumberer a second time, and he slowly opened his eyes to see what I was about.

"What are you doing?" he inquired, as I stood up ready to jump on to the bank as soon as the boat was steady.

"I'm going home," I said, "to find some more agreeable company. I have learned that 'a nice little paddle' with you is not so entertaining as I could have wished."

Cousin Charles raised his hat from over his eyes and rose to his feet with due regard to our equilibrium. With one hand he pulled me down on to the seat, with the other he took the boat-hook and pushed the boat off from the bank into mid-stream.

"Now," he said, seating himself opposite to me and looking straight into my face, "what are your ladyship's commands? I am deeply penitent. What shall I do to prove it? Shall I row you frantically up and down the stream in the sun, or shall we discuss important subjects?"

He was laughing at me, I knew; it was all a joke to him, and I was foolish to take matters seriously. But it was no trifle to me that he cared so little for me; and a worse feeling than either pride or anger—something very like a thirst for revenge—took possession of my heart at that moment.

I took the rudder line and leaned back with a languid air.

"Since you are so very obliging," said I, "we will discuss the matter nearest my heart at the present moment. No doubt you can help me if you will. I want you to recommend me a man who will manage the property and take some of the responsibility off my shoulders.

"I thought you took a pride in managing for yourself?"

"So I did; but I am tired of it. I want a change—I want rest—I want to be free from all care and anxiety."

"Can't you trust Jenkins?" he asked.

"Oh, Jenkins is only a servant—he simply obeys my orders; he does nothing on his own responsibility," I replied. "I want someone who will manage without consulting me."

Though my heart was beating very fast, I spoke with perfect calmness, and looked him full in the face. He had been pulling up stream, with long, swinging strokes, but he now rested on his sculls and looked at me. He was serious now—so serious that I felt the color suddenly leave my face.

"I think," he said, slowly and emphatically, "that it would be the best thing in the world for you to have a man at the head of your affairs."

"Can you recommend one?" I asked, courageously pressing the point.

"I am most willing to help you," he replied; "but let me be sure that I quite understand just what it is that you require. Is it a husband, or simply a steward?"

I looked at him with flashing eyes; but having gone so far, it was impossible to withdraw, and if I could only bring him to the point, and then turn and show him how I despised him, I should have justified my conduct in my own eyes. I spoke very calmly, giving most of my attention to the tassel on the handle of my parasol, which had somehow got twisted.

"Marriage," I said, "would undoubtedly be the best way out of the difficulty; but, unfortunately, no one has asked me to marry him—at least not lately."

"I admire your practical view of the matter," he returned. "You have no romantic nonsense about you as some women have! You will choose a husband, of course, who has a clear head for accounts and a taste for agriculture? A craze for cattle-breeding would be an advantage. It pays well when properly understood. Young Seymour bought a calf the other day for a thousand. You might realize great things from that calf, if you were willing to include young *Seymour in the bargain.*"

Oh, how I hated him at that moment! I actually trembled from head to foot in my suppressed rage and excitement. I felt suddenly as though I could bear no more, and I put out my hand towards the rushes to drag the boat to shore.

"I want to get out," I said in a breathless tone, my voice sounding quite unlike my own.

Charles glanced at my face, which must have been pale enough to alarm him; a moment later the boat was turned in among the rushes, and the next moment her bows were touching the bank. I rose before the boat was steady, and was about to spring out, when he caught hold of me. I tried to draw away my hand, but it was of no use, for he was far stronger than I, and, against my will, I was obliged to accept his help in landing.

"Hate me as much as you like," he said, with an aggravating smile—"but don't drown yourself to spite me."

"Hate you?" I cried passionately. "Yes—I do hate you! You are horrible—insulting!"

I tried again to draw away my hand, but he held me fast and looked into my agitated face. He raised his head proudly, and his blue eyes had an almost fierce expression in them.

"I accused you," he said haughtily, "of intending to marry for reasons altogether apart from love. Do not you, at any rate, in your heart, accuse me of wanting to do the same?"

I was astounded. He had read my thoughts, and had frustrated my intentions. The idea was insupportable. Turning from him, I began to walk back in frantic haste through the long grass towards the house, he keeping pace by my side. What did he think of me? Had he imagined that I was luring him into making a proposal, with the idea of accepting him? The thought was too dreadful!

There was silence between us; but the silence was more dreadful than any conversation could have been. My cheeks were tingling, my eyes smarting—I was overwhelmed with shame. I could not think of a single word to say in self-justification—I was conscious only of a burning desire to hide my head and escape from his sight for ever.

That ten minutes' walk with him through the daisy-sprinkled fields was perhaps the most wretched ten minutes I had ever passed in my life. I felt that I could never raise my head again, never look him in the face, never recover my self-respect, nor efface from his mind the remembrance of my shame! I felt humiliated and degraded, and powerless to explain matters.

As I reached the lawn, where some of my guests were playing tennis, Aunt Morton hurriedly approached me.

"My dear Harriet," she exclaimed, "where have you been hiding yourself? We are awaiting your decision about the picnic. Is it too hot, do you think, or can we brave the sun?"

"Let the girls settle it," I answered. "You know that my complexion can brave anything."

"Don't talk such nonsense, my dear," said aunt Morton, in a vexed tone. "I am sure your complexion is as delicate as any other girl's. You were quite noted for it when you were a child."

"Then it is compietely a thing of the past," I said, with a scornful laugh. "You must remember that I am four and-twenty now."

"What has occurred to put you out of temper?" inquired my aunt, in a low tone, coming nearer to me. "It is bad taste to mention your age—and before gentlemen too!"

"Oh, Charlie knows my age!" I cried, turning to him in my excitement. "He knows well enough that I am not a young girl fresh from school—now, don't you, Charlie?"

"You have one of your bad headaches!" said aunt Morton, severely. "You had better go and lie down."

"'Bad headache' is a polite way of saying 'bad temper,' I presume!" I said, with an hysterical laugh. "Well, whichever it is, I shall be glad to get out of the sun, and will take your advice. Good-bye, Charlie! Take care of the girls, if my headache will not allow me to accompany you!"

With this parting shot, I turned and made my way to the house.

On reaching my own room, I securely locked the door and stretched myself out on the sofa, and buried my face in the cushion.

What had I done? Had I not degraded myself in my own eyes and in his? I had meant to humiliate him. But was that the way to show a woman's best and purest love—the one great love of her life? Ah, no—I did not even love him in the right way! I was spiteful, unwomanly; and any honest, upright man had a right to despise me.

The brown-holland cushion on which I pressed my hot cheek, was wet with my remorseful tears.

My bitter reflections were interrupted by Aunt Morton who came to my door to tell me that every one had voted for the picnic, and that they were all anxious to start as soon as possible. I rose unwillingly from the sofa, bathed my eyes and sought my hat. The "pleasures of the toilet" never possessed great charms for me, but to-day they possessed less than ever—I did not go near the looking-glass. I chose my ugliest and shadiest hat, feeling so absolutely wretched that I did not care how I looked or what became of me.

But however miserable I felt, I determined to hide my misery, and there was nothing I dreaded so much as that my Cousin Charles should discover the true state of my heart.

By half-past twelve the whole party had started for Markham woods. I drove Aunt Morton and Captain Hornby in the pony-carriage. The captain sat beside me. He was very attentive and amiable, and held my parasol in a really perfect manner, managing to screen my eyes from the sun, and yet allowing me a clear view of the road. Mentally, I compared his skill with Cousin Charles' lack of it in similar circumstances.

Charles could hold my parasol very well when he chose—I was forced to recognize that—but his attention was apt to wander. He would see a pheasant rise from the bracken at the roadside, or a rare moth flit past, or a friend in the distance, and immediately the parasol would sway from side to side, catching in my hair, almost poking out my eyes, and leaving me entirely exposed to the glare of the sun.

Of course he was "awfully sorry" as soon as I pointed out his shortcomings, but there was generally a mischievous smile lurking in his eyes or about his lips; and I noticed also that that kind of thing never happened when he was escorting Bella Darcy or Madaline Brown.

To day he was riding with that fascinating flirt Rosamond Mortimer, who looked even better in a riding-habit than she did in a ball-dress. It was very disagreeable to me; but pride demanded that I should bear it was a smiling face as I did.

Captain Hornby held the parasol so remarkably well that I never lost one of the tender glances that it seemed to me were continually passing between my cousin and his companion; and, when a number of cackling geese flew across the road, he put his hand on Fairy's bridle to restrain her restiveness, though he must have known as well as I did that Rosamond was perfectly capable of managing any mare in the kingdom.

In the pony carriage, aunt Morton, Captain Hornby and myself held a most animated and interesting conversation during the whole two hours' drive, but whether the subject was politics or the weather I am unable to state.

I can remember only that my head was aching terribly, and that by the time we arrived at the Markham Woods I should have welcomed the silence of the churchyard more readily than I did the noise and fun of a merry picnic party.

As I entered the wood, leaning on Captain Hornby's arm, and closely followed by aunt Morton, I pictured to myself how cousin Charles, having found that I was not amenable to his scheme, would console himself with the lovely Miss Mortimer, penniless though she was; how they would settle down and live on Charles' income, while I stood by, a witness to their domestic bliss; how I should hide my woes with a gay exterior, and devote myself to their eldest son, being his fond and foolish slave during my life, and making him my heir at my death.

These dismal reflections were interrupted by a summons to me to help to lay the cloth for luncheon.

Those of the party who were good natured, or anxious to appear so, began, heedless of the fierce rays of the sun, to carry big hampers to the shade of the beech trees, where the baskets were emptied of their contents. Miss Mortimer had seated herself on the mossy trunk of a fallen tree, declaring languidly that "the mere thought of food in the midst of such scenery was revolting in the extreme."

"I hope they have not forgotten to pack the salmon and the pineapples," I exclaimed in an exceedingly interested tone—"and the lobsters, too! What is a picnic without lobsters?"

"Do you really care about such things?" Miss Mortimer inquired, while cousin Charles no doubt made pleasing comparisons in his own mind between young ladies who did and those who did not possess a sense of poetry and romance.

"You must know, Miss Mortimer," I answered in a cheerful tone, "that after a certain age, one lives to enjoy the solid pleasures of life, and I must confess to a hankering after lobster, and a strong desire that there should be no mishap with the salmon. Charles, I wish you would set my mind at rest and hunt in that basket over there. I really am afraid that Spicer forgot it after all."

Cousin Charles searched for the lobster and brought it to me. I gazed at it longingly, and asked him to lay it in the shade while I found a dish. Miss Mortimer watched me with a slight curve of the lip; but notwithstanding her affected disdain, when the lobster was cut, it was she who ate her portion of it with a relish and I who turned from it unable even to touch it. Indeed I found it difficult not to allow my want of appetite to be noticed, for I could not swallow even a crumb without a sensation of being choked. In spite, however, of my want of appetite, I was the life and soul of the party. But my most lively sallies failed to bring a smile to Sir Charles' face, he being too deeply and pleasantly engaged to give me even the slightest attention.

He was lying on the grass at Miss Mortimer's side, evidently making himself very agreeable to her, speaking in low tones, and with his eyes fixed admiringly on her face. I might have gone saltless, breadless, cucumberless, for all he cared, had not Captain Hornby devoted himself to me. No doubt I appeared to every one to be particularly fortunate, yet I can truthfully say that I was never more wretched than I was that day.

After luncheon it was suggested that we should all go to the Wishing-well and secure happiness by drinking its waters. Not one—not even Captain Hornby—could induce me to go. I declared that I had not a wish in the world, and that the magic waters possessed no charm for me. I stayed behind and helped good-natured Mary Smith to clear away the luncheon things, sending away even my gallant admirer with a succession of snubs that left him no alternative but to leave me. At last I was left with only Aunt Morton for companionship. She had a camp-stool, and a long stocking in process of manufacture; and feeling myself classed among the old maids, I also drew from my pocket a huge mustard-colored stocking and began to knit as industriously as Aunt Morton herself was doing.

"How energetic young people are!" I exclaimed. "Fancy toiling up that hill in the sun, when one can sit quietly in the shade! Thank goodness, my days for such madness are long past!"

Had I really reached that stage of spinsterhood when a camp-stool and knitting are preferable to climbing hills and drinking magic waters? Ah, no! My heart was with the romance of life still; and, as the bright needles flashed in the sunlight, I felt that many, many years would have to pass before I became a satisfactory spinster. Aunt Morton, as was usual whenever I alluded to my age, had been deeply hurt by my last remark, and she deigned no reply.

I was only too thankful to be silent, and, with a sigh of relief, leaned back against the tree-trunk. My thoughts were not of a cheerful description. I had seen Charles wander off with the fair Rosamond, though my eyes had apparantly been intent upon plates and dishes at the time, and I imagined the delightful time they were probably having beside the Wishing-well. How romantic to plight their troth on the magic spot and implore the sprite of the place to endow them with everlasting happiness!

I even smiled when I conjured up this touching picture; yet it was in reality no smiling matter. Cousin Charles, in spite of all his teasing, aggravating ways, was all the world to me; and, that being the case, I could only look forward to a most blank and dreary future passed without him—a future in which I should be consigned to the companionship of aunt Morton for life, while the beautiful Rosamond reigned supreme over my cousin's heart and home.

At this point my meditations were interrupted by a strange sound close beside me, which caused me to start, and, turning hastily, I became aware that aunt Morton's head had sank upon her breast, that her knitting had fallen to the ground, and that the noise that had startled me was nothing more nor less than a snore. It was too much for me. I rose from the hamper on which I had been sitting, and walked away among the trees.

Almost unconsciously, I proceeded in the direction of the Wishing-well. I climbed the hill, and sauntered through the wood without meeting anyone; and I found the well without difficulty, for I had been to it once before, when a child. Cousin Charles had brought me. He had made me a cup out of a leaf, and had given me a few drops of water to drink; and I had wished that he and I might be allowed to go hunting together when the winter came.

Would I waste a precious wish in that way now? How little I had prized the improvised cup, or the boyish hand that held it! Now I should be thankful for the slightest attention.

On reaching the well, I seated myself upon the ground and looked into its clear depths. I stooped and dipped my hand into the icy water, and then raised it to my lips, and was about to drink, when my wrist was seized from behind.

Starting violently and spilling the water into my lap, I jumped to my feet. Who but Cousin Charles would have dared to startle me so? I uttered an indignant exclamation, and examined my sprinkled dress with minute care. Cousin Charles apologized for his behavior, and without waiting to be forgiven:

"I thought you had not a wish in the whole world?" he said, leaning against the rock with his hands in his pockets, and looking intently into my face. "Yet I detected you in the very act of wishing."

"I was thirsty," I replied.

"Thirsty or not, you were wishing a very important wish," he returned. "Do you think I don't know the various expressions of your face? You don't sip your sherry at luncheon with that tragic air!"

"Well, and if I was," I demanded defiantly, "what then?" And I raised my head and encountered two shrewd blue eyes with a steadiness that was truly courageous.

"Simply that you were not setting about it in the right way. This is the original plan—don't you remember?"

Plucking a leaf from the tree which shaded the well, he made it into a cup. This he filled with water from the well, and then gravely advanced a step or two towards me.

"If it were Rosamond Mortimer instead of me, it would be a case of 'Drink, pretty creature, drink,'" I said with a short laugh. "By-the-way, what has become of Miss Mortimer? I was under the impression that she was in your charge."

"I neither know nor care!" replied Charlie, taking me by the wrist and raising the cup to my mouth. "Drink, and wish your dearest wish. I spoiled the other, and would not deprive you of it."

He took my hand and held it with a gentle pressure; the look in his eyes too—a peculiar intentness and interest—made my heart begin to beat violently. A sudden confusion possessed me, and I could not hide it. My eyes fell upon the socks lying on the ground.

"My dearest wish," I said, "is that these socks I am knitting may be a good fit."

"I hope they are destined for my feet."

"No, they are for Weller, the butcher. He has both gout and bunions."

"Lucky man. Why not favor me with little attentions of this sort?"

"Please let go my hand!" I cried. "All the water has run out of the leaf."

"I'm not going to let you waste a wish on those rocks. Take another chance."

"I don't believe in such rubbish," I said.

"I wish you'd let go my hand! you're—"

"But I particularly like holding it," Charles returned irritatingly.

Charles turned, still holding my hand tightly in his, and plucking another large leaf from the tree overhead, rolled it up, stooped, and filled it with water.

"Now for my wish," he said. "You shall hear it whether you want to or not, for it concerns you."

"I wish that I may win the woman I love—the only woman in the whole world I care a jot for. Harriet, Harriet, help me! Let it come true——"

"I?" I cried, with a tremulous voice. "What have I to do with it?"

"Everything! You know you are all the world to me."

I wrenched away my hand; my cheeks flushed crimson, and my heart beat so quickly that I could scarcely breathe.

"Harrie," he said tenderly—"my dear girl, my dearest—don't send me away! I must—I will be believed! Look up, darling! Is the future worth having if we don't spend it together?"

"No," I answered, in a low tone.

At that moment we heard someone crashing through the thick bushes, and Captain Hornby's voice calling:—

"Miss Markham—Sir Charles—where are you? Tea, tea, tea!",

He had not seen us, for we were hidden by some bushes, and soon his voice died out in the distance, and I felt relieved.

"Lucky, wasn't it?" he exclaimed. "But we haven't long."

He put his arm round me and suddenly kissed me on the lips.

"Oh, don't!" I cried.

"Can you guess what I want you to do?"

I shook my head.

I broke away from him and began to descend the hill, passing under the thick trees and wading through the tangled grasses and ferns. The ground was rough and uneven, and I found walking difficult. Charles put out his hand to help me.

"Take my hand, Harrie," he said—"I will keep you steady."

I gave it to him.

"And your love, Harrie?" he asked.

"And my love," I returned steadily.

"Be my wife!" he said.

"I will risk it—I will be your wife," I replied.

He drew me closer to him and kissed me again.

"Why didn't you let me do all this before?" he whispered. "I wanted to do it months ago. We've lost time, Harrie, through your hateful pride. Kiss me, dearest, and heal the wound that has been aching—aching for so long."

I might possibly have tried to obey him had I not heard at that moment a crashing and snapping of underwood, as though some one was approaching. On looking around, we saw Captain Hornby coming through the bushes in our direction.

Then we made our way down the hill towards the tea party in the valley.

My heart was filled with a new warmth and happiness. Yes; Charles loved me—really loved me for myself. I knew it now beyond a doubt; and, as we then descended the hillside into the valley, it seemed to me that we were entering Paradise itself—crossing the threshold of a new and perfect life.

Scientific and Useful.

MOVING THE CEILING.—In a concert hall of Paris, electric energy has been put to the novel use of moving the ceiling. This is in two parts, which are drawn back on travelling cranes, opening the hall to the glass roof by day. The opening or closing of the ceiling is effected in one minute by two electric motors.

PUSS IN GLASSES.—A wealthy lady who possesses a pet Maltese cat found recently that the cat's eyesight began to fail, so she took him to an oculist. By means of a picture of a mouse the oculist quickly learned what was the matter, and was able to fit the cat with glasses. The lenses were set in gold frames especially made, and now the cat's eyesight is as good as ever.

FIREPROOF PAPER.—A new fireproof paper, made in Berlin, is reported to be capable of resisting even the direct influence of flame, while it may be placed in a white heat without harm. It consists of 95 parts of the best asbestos fibre, which is washed in a solution of permanganate of calcium, and then treated with sulphuric acid and 5 parts of ground wood pulp, the entire mass being placed in the agitating box, with the addition of some lime water and borax. After thorough mixing, the material is pumped into a regulating box, and allowed to flow out of a gate into an endless wire cloth, where it enters the usual paper-making machinery.

Farm and Garden.

HORSES.—If you have a horse that refuses to go when asked, take a small rope and wrap it twice around the leg just below the knee, draw it tight and tie it. In a few minutes the horse will start. If he should show any indications of repeating the offense repeat the dose and he will be cured effectually.

SWINE.—It is easy to "save at the spigot and waste at the bung" when keeping growing swine. There is most profit in keeping them growing steadily and fast. The sow with a long, deep, flat side makes the best brood sow. The closing-knit, plump, rounded sow rarely ever has very large litters and can be an unruly good mother.

PERFUMES.—By the aid of liquid carbonic acid and gas, flowers can be deprived of their own perfume and scented with that of other blossoms. Marigolds are made to smell like roses, and marguerites given the perfume of violets. Other blossoms are scented with lavender and musk. Pretty flowers, which have little or no perfume, can thus be made additionally attractive.

SMOKE.—French peasants often make a very smoky fire on the approach of a thunderstorm, believing that safety from lightning is thus secured. Smoke acts as a good conductor for carrying away electricity slowly and safely. In 1,000 cases of damage by lightning 63 churches and 8.5 mills were struck, while of factory chimneys there were but 0 5.

Two years ago I was afflicted with a bad Cough, which the physicians pronounced to be CONSUMPTION, but after using two bottles of Jayne's Expectorant, I was much gratified to find myself entirely cured.—C. H. THOMAS, Cedarville, Texas, Oct. 21, 1865.

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In Wrong Ways.

There is a well-understood phrase which describes men who have made their lives a frilure—they are said to have "gone wrong." No more serious allegation can be made against any man. Very much less decisive is it to be "getting into wrong ways;" that is the beginning of the failure which, when completed, causes a man to be spoken of as having "gone wrong." While any one is only "getting into wrong ways" he may recover himself by an effort, if he can be brought to see the folly of his conduct; but, if ever he "goes wrong," the fact remains scored against him for a lifetime.

Loitering time away to no good purpose is a form of getting into wrong ways, and it is perhaps growing in seriousness through the devotion of the young to amusement. Recreation is excellent—when it has been earned. The number of those who regard it as the main purpose of their lives is increasing fast. Unless we make a serious attempt to map out our days we never know how much is frittered away in sheer waste. The first duty is to fix and keep a minimum time for sheer work. If that be done, the rest is comparatively easy. As a rule the man or woman who has fair ability and really works "gets on," and does not lack appreciation. Any slackness in work is usually a sign of a drift into wrong ways.

In men a tendency to extravagance and a failure to find work engrossing usually combine in the form of a liking for company and the drinking that is associated with men's social gatherings in "off" hours. All these weaknesses may be summed up in one term—self-indulgence. The thoughtless spending of money which need not have been spent, and which did not leave the spender one whit the better for his disbursement was simply a weak self-indulgence. The failure to plod on steadily at work, the placing of too high a value on amusement, the easy-going resort to places where men relax and think chiefly of personal enjoyment, is self-indulgence pure and simple, and whoever falls into this spirit is losing the bracing up of nerve and muscle which is essential to success; he is getting into wrong ways, and the sooner he turns back to steady duty as the chief aim of life the happier he will be.

We are not denying that there is a form of going wrong which is the precise opposite of that to which we are referring. There is a too close adherence to work and duty which makes life intolerably humdrum; there are a primness and a precision that repel to such an extent that they denude life of genuine success almost as surely as carelessness and self-indulgence do; but these forms of deterioration are less common and less in touch with the spirit of the age than the tendency to irresponsible ease which we have been condemning.

The man may be said to be getting into wrong ways who, either in his own acts, or through the company he keeps, is living below the higher levels of his own character. When you see a man getting on "the down grade" in this way, how can you give him a warning and a helping hand? If he has good sense, he will know that he is not doing himself justice; but, none the less, he may be averse from hearing the truth from any one but himself. The men who would be best able to put a friend on his mettle are usually the men who would be most sensitive in undertaking a duty of the kind. The dull, pushing, good man without taste will scatter his warnings right and left, and as often as not does harm. It requires a singularly sensitive nature to draw the good out of men who are getting into wrong ways, and to give them the heart to cease from whatever is injuring them and make a fresh start along the lines of their better selves. There is no need for discouragement; for, be it remembered, almost every man, at some time in his career, goes a certain distance along ways which, farther pursued, would lead towards disaster.

In this connection perhaps one may be allowed to say, without seeming to trench upon the preacher's ground, that there is a shamefacedness in men, in all attempts to keep up the spiritual side of character, which contrasts significantly with the ease with which they fall into talk and ways that can do no good and almost certainly must do harm. We do not mean that when men meet together promiscuously they should lay bare their inmost thoughts and most sacred experiences, or lead conversation round to religion or the great problems of the world.

Such questions can properly take a place only with a thousand more worldly matters, unless our conversation is to run close to the confines of cant and sanctimoniousness. But we can always remember our duty to what is beautiful and of good report; we can keep our own minds, and the minds of others, off the lower planes of animalism; we can show that we have a care for what is likely to raise the standards of morality and taste in future generations; we can recognize the complexity of human character, and set our faces against the purely material view of life which has such almost unrestrained sway; we can keep our ears open to the music hymned through the ages by the accumulating thought of humanity, instead of allowing ourselves to sink into the slough of sense or be overwhelmed by the trivialities of the day.

Our characters are like our gardens; they need the constant weeding-out of perhaps unexpected growths. They are like our rooms and desks, which must from time to time be resolutely made tidy, or confusion follows. There may be people in the world who can keep along the even road of perfection, or what is practically perfection, but they are very few in number, most of us getting a little wrong before we know that we are wrong. We are brought up sharply by the knowledge that we have been acting more foolishly than might reasonably have been expected of people with as much sense as we prided ourselves on possessing.

What should be our attitude towards ourselves when a self-audit has convinced us that we might have been wiser, more circumspect — that we might, in short, have been different with manifest advantage to ourselves? The common-sense view is to be different at once, to clear off the gathering weeds, to make a fresh start, with a watchful eye upon the weaknesses which perhaps have been becoming pleasant to us. And to our friends we owe the difficult and delicate duty of a warning, if they should be slipping, almost unawares, into habits that will be dangerous by-and-by.

Do you know some good fellow who is beginning to be talked about, to be looked askance at, who is losing caste just a little because he is offending public opinion in this or that direction, who is consorting with people whom he had better avoid, who is becoming slack in business, or too fond of pleasure, who is known now and again to give way to indulgences which undermine the respect felt for him by his neighbors; then, hard as it may be to do it, it is your duty as a good friend and citizen to find some method of bringing him face to face with the facts in such a manner as will not further destroy his self-respect, and so save yourself from a complicity of non-interference if he should continue in his course and evoke the sad and terrible verdict—"Gone wrong!"

It is only very selfish people who contrive to be always happy and placid whatever happens. They are so thoroughly unsympathetic, so unmoved by the joys and sorrows of others, that so long as they live in comfort they are perfectly content. But a great many well-meaning people contrive to be unhappy when they might well be the reverse. They have made up their minds that this world is a sad and weary one, and they will not grasp and benefit by the few joys that come in their way. They may fully understand the divine dictum, "weep with those that weep," but they fail to realize the equally binding obligation to "rejoice with those that do rejoice."

CHIEFLY through action can we hope to modify feeling. We can encourage a sentiment of patriotism by an active effort to further the good of our country; we can cherish emotions of love or compassion by loving words and generous actions, and we can on the other hand, diminish a feeling of anger by withholding the sharp word and bitter retort that rise to our lips, and abate a lot of ill-humor by insisting on a cheerful countenance and a pleasant manner. All emotion has its corresponding action, and it thrives or declines as this is exercised or denied. But it is a slow and gradual work, and demands increasing attention and unfailing courage and persistence, while meeting with small results.

EMERSON says, "Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy." Some grown-up people and some children think they prove their superiority in wealth or social position by behaving rudely to others who, in these respects, are not so well off as they are; but the only thing they really do prove is that they have a small and mean disposition, and are very ill-bred.

IT does not require much money to make a happy home-circle. The chief thing is a warm and merry heart. That will devise ways and means for filling the home with cheerfulness, joy, and gladness. A little effort and much love will give a halo brighter than tinsel or gold.

SYMPATHY is one of the great secrets of life. It overcomes evil and strengthens good. It disarms resistance, melts the hardened heart, and develops the better part of human nature.

Correspondence.

E. T. C. P.—Posse comitatus signifies the civil power of the county, or the citizens who may be summoned to assist the officer in suppressing a riot, etc.

G. N.—A drawing-room is for the presentation of ladies while a levee is for the introduction of gentlemen at Court; the Queen of England generally makes the Prince of Wales her deputy at this function.

V. M. R.—There is nothing we are acquainted with that will make the hands smaller. Be content with what nature has provided for you. It does not at all follow that a large hand is unhandsome.

MICHAEL F.—What is termed a "soft-headed wheel," or a wheel without emery and mutton-suet, is used for finishing and polishing fine-edged tools. An emery or flint wheel may be purchased ready for use from hardware stores.

PUZZLED.—A generation is the interval of time that elapses between the birth of a father and the birth of his child. It has been generally allowed that thirty-three years are the mean length of a generation, or three generations to every hundred years.

B. S.—Christ cross row, or criss cross row, is a familiar designation formerly applied to the first line, or row, of the alphabet, as arranged in the old horn-book or primers. The first line commenced with a Greek cross, and it was from that fact that the term originated.

FEST UND TREU.—Say, "Excuse my keeping you waiting." Your act is to be excused. "Me" does not "keep you waiting." Of course, exertion, such as walking fast or running, makes the heart beat fast, and thus the circulation is quickened, which, in a moderate degree, does good.

E. R. S.—Brigham Young, at the time of his death, August 29, 1877, had twenty wives and sixty-four children. His nineteenth wife, Ann Eliza, created an uproar in the harem and also abroad, by suing for a divorce, which she could not obtain on the ground that her marriage was not a legal one.

P. L. M.—The meaning of the phrase "rank and file" as applied to soldiers—each word taken separately—"rank," a line of private soldiers standing shoulder to shoulder in a line; and "file," when they stand one behind another, yet still facing the same way. The double term means to include an entire body of troops.

G. W.—Sometimes the word degree is used for generation, in which case the third degree means the same as the third generation. In that sense grandchild would be in the third degree of relationship to its grandparents. In other cases the term degree is applied to the consanguinity of collateral relatives, such as cousins. In that sense third cousins are in the sixth degree of relationship.

G. S.—The difficulty of making a canvas bag air-tight would be in hermetically closing the seam or seams. Were it not for this fact, such a bag could be coated with liquid rubber. A rubber bag will prove much more satisfactory, and can be made of sufficient thickness to withstand an inside pressure of twenty or twenty-five pounds to the square inch. There are several rubber dealers in your city from whom such an article may be purchased. It would be advisable to have it made to order.

M. O.—The stethoscope was invented by Laennec, of Paris. By rolling a quire of paper into a kind of cylinder, and applying one end of the patient's chest and the other to his own ear, he perceived the action of the heart in a much more distinct manner than by the immediate application of the ear. This led to his construction of a more elaborate instrument, and the art of auscultation or listening has since then made rapid progress. It is of comparatively recent date.

MILL F.—1. Cycle is a term used in Chronology to denote an interval of time in which certain phenomena always recur in the same order. 2. The Lunar Cycle is the same as the Metonic Cycle, or cycle of the golden numbers. It embraces a period of nineteen years The golden numbers range from one to nineteen. The cycle of Meton, or Metonic Cycle—so called from its inventor—came into use soon after its discovery, and the number of each year in the cycle was ordered to be engraved in letters of gold on pillars of marble. Hence the origin of this name. 3. The cycle of the sun, or Solar Cycle, is a period of twenty-eight years, at the end of which time the days of the months return to the same days of the week. The dominical letter is the same, and follows the same order; hence it is also called the cycle of the Sunday letter.

BESSIE.—You should have kept quiet. And perhaps the reason why you cannot attract and hold the admiration you confess to be seeking so earnestly is just because you are too eager about it, too self-conscious—think and talk too much about yourself. Study how to correct such vanity. Extend your information, and take an amiable interest in other people, and in outside things. You cannot interest men for any length of time by a pretty face and silly airs and graces. People play with a kitten, but they tire of it as a companion. You ask why it is that persons of the opposite sex stare at you and inquire about you when you go to a strange town or neighborhood. There is nothing so remarkable in this. There are plenty of idle and brainless youths in every town, and staring seems to be their forte. As you are pretty, and, no doubt, look conscious of the fact, they feel privileged to stare and inquire.

UNTIL THE END.

BY M. A.

Nothing new under the sun!
Mornings and midnights one by one
Joining the hosts that have gone before.
Yet mornings and midnights evermore
Carry their record of joys and ills!
Everything "old as the hills."

Nothing new in the world of toil;
Sowing the seed and ploughing the soil,
Gathering the fruit, and reaping the grain,
Over and over and over again.
Ploughing and sowing, my friend, to-day;
Sowing and reaping for aye!

Nothing new in the human heart,
Loving and hating the player's part;
Sinning, repenting from day to day,
Hoping and fearing along the way;
Laughing and weeping until man dies,
Everything old as the skies.

Nothing new in the world of ours;
This year's blooms are but last year's flowers,
This year's hoard but last year's fruit;
Following, following, following suit.
In the earth beneath, in the heavens above,
Everything old as love!

The Last Time.

BY E. C. C.

THE 15th of January. How well I remember that date. And what a January it was. How raw, wet and miserable. Nobody went out who could stay at home; but I went out. I went to call upon Miss Melinda Meeking.

Sad at heart and weary I toiled up the steep stairs of her step-mother's little house, following the slatternly servant with a big hole in the heel of her stocking and a dirty cap.

My son was engaged to Melinda. When I tell you that I tell you all. No need to dilate upon my sufferings, nor to describe what I had gone through before I brought myself to give—not my consent, no, I never consented. "If it must be, it must be!" I said at last, and the next day I set off to call upon her.

Mrs. Meeking lived at No. 2, Rose Villas, in the suburb of Beenford, a manufacturing town. I lived about ten miles away from Beenford, at the Grange near Lulstone. We were not very rich people; my sister and I were co-heirs-esses to my father's property, and my late husband had been the vicar of Lulstone. I had never met Melinda, nor heard of her, in any society I frequented. Where my son first met her I know not, and I never asked.

My first interview was as bad as I expected it to be, and I can say no more of it than that. The fat, good-tempered-looking old mother felt sorry for me, I thought—and when I met the pitying look of her watery blue eyes, my heart melted to her, but hardened more than ever to the detestable girl who I imagined made her mother miserable and was going to do the same for my son. Mrs. Meeking told me early in the conversation that she had married "Poor Meeking" when his daughter was ten years old and had been a mother to her ever since, at which Melinda scowled at her and said nothing.

She was very handsome—there could be no two opinions about that. She was tall and upright as a dart, with a skin as white as milk, big brown eyes, and a cloud of dusky hair—that badly wanted a good brushing, and in both eyes and hair that gleam of red that means only one thing—temper.

She wore a gaudy blue gown, that fitted her figure well, her cuffs and her collar were soiled and tumbled, but her hands were well cared for and as spotless as my own. What fidgetted me very much in her was that one of her cuffs had come loose from its fastenings and continually slipped down over her knuckles, and she as constantly pushed it back again, and made futile attempts to secure it to the sleeve of her gown with a large white pin.

That cuff had a horrid fascination for me. I felt myself going to say, "It is coming down again," every moment, and bit my lips to keep back the words, while Melinda herself, with her untidy head and her restless, self-conscious manner, jarred upon every nerve in my body. It is all over, now, poor soul, but I never think of that day without a shudder of disgust.

My misery would have been quite unbearable had Melinda not possessed one attraction, and that to my taste, a great one: she had a lovely voice. Low, soft and rich, even her common accent could not spoil it.

That voice charmed me so that I have sat in the firelight while she sang to me, and carried away by the liquid gush of melody, I have even for the moment forgotten that she was Melinda Meeking, and going to marry my son.

That voice was a fatal gift of hers. Without it Lady Willoughby would never have taken a fancy to her, never have asked her to her daughter's wedding, and Melinda would not have been the centre of the tragedy of the season. But she was, and it all came about in this way.

I was going up to town a week or two before the wedding, and as at that time of the year, in January, one doesn't meet many people there, and I never dreamt of her being invited to the Willoughbys', I asked her to go up with me.

I could not have her at the Grange, under the eyes of all my friends at Lulstone, and some who were not, perhaps, my friends; pitying, or malicious eyes as the case might be. I had been so proud of my son and thought no woman good enough for him, and now to come down to Melinda. No, I could not introduce her at Lulstone; it was impossible.

When I gave my invitation she fixed me with her big brown eyes, and said slowly:

"My clothes won't do for the city—with you."

Her look was honest, and her words showed sense.

"No," I answered, returning her stare with interest. "They will not, I think, but you will give me the pleasure of accepting——"

Melinda stopped me abruptly. "You can't pay for my clothes," she said. "But I have ten pounds of my own. Will you spend it for me? Will you get me the right things?"

"Yes," I said, "I will."

And I did.—and for a moment I liked Melinda—and I liked her again when she met me at the station a week later, dressed in a quiet brown traveling suit, and hat to match, the color of her eyes, with a fleck of red in it, bought by me out of the ten pounds, and she had plaited all her thick hair into a prim knot at the back of her head, like mine, and if she could only have kept her head quiet, and her elbows in the right place, she would have looked not only a lovely girl, but a lady. It was pathetic, or it seems so now on looking back upon that time, the determination of the girl to copy me in every action.

I even heard a note of my own voice now and then, in her fresh young tones. When I took off my glove to find my ticket, Melinda took off hers; when I brushed my sandwich crumbs from my lap with a flimy pocket handkerchief, Melinda instantly produced her own, not filmy, and with a red border—I had forgotten the pocket-handkerchiefs—and flicked off her crumbs with a dainty gesture that I knew repeated mine.

I saw her, poor child! furtively watching me as I ate my lunch and drank from my silver cup, and I had an opportunity the next moment of observing just how my way of doing these things looked in another person.

It worried me horribly then, but, as I say, I feel the pathos of it now. We reached the city too late for anything but supper and bed.

The next day rain poured down in torrents, and my dressmaker came, and I was busy and tired, and Melinda read a novel by the fire, and wrote to my son, I believe, and I saw little of her till tea-time.

My house in town is one my dear father left me, a charming little home, at a corner on Piccadilly, with a side view from the narrow bay windows, into the Green Park.

After tea I dozed off for a little while. Melinda sat as still as a mouse, and when I awoke with a jump (I thought I heard someone call on my son's name), she was looking sadly into the bright wood fire and tears were on her cheek. I hate scenes and I never can resist people when they cry, so I said all in a hurry:

"Do you sing? will you sing to me?" and Melinda got up hastily and went to the piano without a word. Perhaps she too hated scenes—it is possible. I forget what she sang, and it doesn't matter, but I never can forget her voice—she had been well taught, I heard afterwards, by the Lulstone organist, who gave her lessons for love, literally, for he proposed to her periodically for two years. All melancholy songs touched a chord in my old heart, and I asked her presently to sing one of Blumenthal's that I particularly affect.

She did and fairly electrified me. It was really the cry of a broken heart. I never heard anything more hopeless in my life, and the refrain "when we are parted!" went wailing on and dying away round the room, like the crying of ghosts. The doors opened quietly, just an inch, in the middle of it and when it was quite over, I heard Lady Willoughby's voice and she came out of the shadowy corner of the room and held out her hand saying:

"Forgive me, but I could not interrupt that. What a treat you have given me!"

Augusta Willoughby is like me, a sentimental old goose, and we both had tears in our eyes, and she turned to Melinda and pressed her hand quite tenderly.

"My dear, you must sing to me again," she said, and looked enquiringly at me, and I was obliged to introduce Miss Meeking, and of course the room was dark, and she only saw a tall, elegant figure and the outline of a pale face and dark hair, and after another song, asked me on the spot to bring Miss Meeding, as she called her, with me to the weddings, and then she launched out into all the details of that event and Gertie Willoughby's dresses, and presents and so forth, and Melinda was forgotten. As for me, I don't think I heard one word in a dozen.

Melinda at the Willoughby's! I chaperoning Miss Meeking to the wedding! If Augusta had slapped me on the face I could not have felt more bewildered. When she had gone, after repealing the invitation, to which Melinda murmured "Thank you," in my very own voice, if you please, I suddenly came to a decision. I would take her. My son must introduce her to his friends some day—very well, his mother will do it for him now, and make the best of a bad bargain and help the boy through his troubles.

I did this with the kindest intentions, and sorely against the grain, and all the time not I, but fate, was taking Melinda to the Willoughby wedding. Kismet—it was to be! as I tell myself to this day, when I begin thinking, as we all do, of those haunting "ifs."

"If I had not done this; if I had not said that, how changed all the world would be for me!"

We are wrong. Nothing would have changed. All that has happened was to happen, just in that way, and no other. In blessed ignorance of the future, just then, I threw myself with enthusiasm into dressing Melinda to the best advantage, and I succeeded to a charm. I took her to the most celebrated house in city, and though the time was short, they sent her a dream of beauty in the shape of a white gown. "It must be white," said the artist who interviewed us, "satin, I think; Empire cut, with lace, if possible, and a thought of red near her face, a diamond brooch, perhaps? Yes? Gloves long, of course, and loose, and a lace sunshade; a knot of red on the handle, I think. Yes, certainly, a sunshade," she added, after a look at Melinda's restless elbows.

"Something to carry, of course to keep her hands quiet!" now why had I not thought of that? I gave that clever woman control of everything, and when I saw Melinda dressed, I ceased to wonder for the moment at my son's folly. She made a lovely picture as I saw her reflected in the long glass when I went into her room on the day of the wedding.

The white satin fell softly round her pretty figure, and some of my best lace hung like a mist about her throat and shapely shoulders. Her hat was simply a foam of white feathers that nestled upon her brown hair and drooped round the coil of shining plaits low down upon her neck.

When the last touches were being put to her toilette a strange thing happened. I had given her a diamond star in the morning, one of my own, and the girl's delight at the gift broke through her assumed manner, and she became quite natural and vulgar again, in an instant. "Oh, ain't it lovely!" she cried. "Oh, you are kind"—and kissed me.

I positively hated her when she did it, and rubbed my cheek hard to get rid of that kiss. I wish now I had not. My maid had fastened the star on a piece of red velvet, a lovely shade of color, and the diamonds flashed their brightest on it, and when I went into the room she had just fastened it round Melinda's throat.

I never saw a prettier woman than she looked at that moment. The effect of the bit of color, and the gleam of the jewels, under her face was extraordinary—but she suddenly turned very white.

"Not that red band on my throat," she said, "it looks like blood," and she untied it roughly and put it down with a shiver.

"You are quite too absurd," I said, very much annoyed, of course.

"Well," she retorted rudely, "how would you like to go out looking as if some one had cut your throat?"

"La, Miss Meeking," breathed my maid; as for me, I walked out of the room and told Melinda to follow me to the drawing-room when she was ready.

She came very quickly. The red velvet and diamonds had been replaced, and in silence we fared forth to the Willoughbys'.

I found out as soon as we crossed the doorstep what sort of a sensation we were going to make. I saw the men who were crowding up the staircase openly wondering who Melinda was, and nudging elbows to call each other's attention to her.

I have a swarm of young nieces and cousins, and am quite used to taking pretty girls about to places, and to receiving the respectful attention of the men who want to dance with them, but this was quite another matter; and I heard one man say to his friend:

"Who has old Fane got with her now?"

"Old Fane" is me.

I must say I think when men are not quite nice, they are very, very unpleasant.

I hurried over my greetings to the bride, and went on to the inner drawing room to look at the presents; one table was kept for the diamonds, and very lovely they were, and by the side of them stood a gentlemanly-looking person, whom I supposed to be the family lawyer, but I had soon very good reason to know he was a detective, Robins by name—how sick of the sound of it I became before all was done!

I am afraid I cannot possibly give you quite a clear account of what followed. It is confused in my memory like the broken fragments of an uneasy dream. A few facts stand out distinctly, and for the rest, it is all a blurred vision of many faces, whispering voices, and the rustle of a moving crowd of women as they all at first pressed closely round us, Melinda and me, and then drew away and left us two standing by ourselves, face to face with Mr. Robins.

We had not been in that little back drawing room (I have never entered it again, and never will) more than ten minutes, before a diamond crescent, valued at five hundred dollars, vanished under the very nose of the detective, who stood by the side of it.

An over-dressed woman in a pink gown and a thick white veil, had stumbled over somebody's train and fell against Melinda, and there was a little confusion in the room, and the moment before I had seen an elderly clergyman speak to Mr. Robins, and asked him to tell him the name on a card that had slipped on one side of a tiara on the table.

It was a splendid piece of jewelry, and I also wanted to know who had given it, and I leant forward to hear the answer. Mr. Robins gave a very curt reply, thought, but at the same instant the lady in pink fell against Melinda and nearly knocked me down, and with no apology of any sort, walked straight out of the room.

I had time to reflect on the want of manners of a London mob, and to wish myself back at Lulstone, as indeed I had done fifty times already, when that man Robins lifted up his voice like a trumpet, and shouted out:—

"Lock the door, Number Thirty?" and a footman in the Willoughby livery instantly did lock the door, and stood with his back to it, and there we all were like rats in a trap. I need not say that "Number Thirty" was no footman at all, but another detective, disguised in our host's blue and silver.

What a world! What a society! Give me Lulstone. We may be dull there, but, at any rate, I am not driven to ask the village policemen to my parties, for fear my guests will pocket the teaspoons or knives.

Our position was quickly explained to us. It was a terrible moment. There must have been thirty people in the room and we all stood absolutely still; I am sure not one of us moved.

"A crescent has been taken," said Mr. Robins, holding up the empty case. "Can any lady or gentleman give me a clue to the thief?"

Melinda was holding my arm, and, at this question she gripped me so tightly that I could not repress a movement of pain.

The hawk eye of that detective was on us in an instant.

"Have you anything to say, madam?" he asked Melinda.

Every head was turned in our direction and the people near us fell back a little, and left us with a clear space round us, the focus of all the curious eyes.

The color rushed into Melinda's face, and slowly died away again and left her as pale as the dead.

"Yo-o-es," she faltered.

At this I quietly released my arm from her hand, though I did not move from her side, and in a moment's dreadful silence I realized the depth of my own rashness, for what did I really know of Melinda or her people, beyond the fact that she had bewitched my son? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

Mr. Robins waited Melinda's further revelations, and I whispered:

"Go on. Tell the truth."

"A lady stumbled and fell against me —," Melinda had clasped her hands together, and her words came with a gasp for breath between each. "She put her hand—I think—into my pocket—"

"Would you know the lady again?"

The elderly clergyman asked this question; he was a remarkable-looking man, with a pair of gloomy black eyes and a scar on his upper lip.

Melinda would have replied, but Mr. Robins cut her short.

"Never mind that," he said sharply. "Answer me, if you please."

"Did she take anything out of your pocket?"

No, Melinda thought not.

"Perhaps she put something into it?" struck in the irresistible cleric, with a most unpleasant smile.

Dead silence—as for me I hardly breathed.

"That is easily ascertained," said Mr. Robins slowly. "Will you oblige me by looking?"

For one instant she hesitated. Yes, openly in the eyes of the world, my world, she hung back, and a breath of suppressed excitement passed through the crowd.

Robins threw a glance at Number Thirty, who left the door and strolled leisurely over in our direction, but before he moved, he took the key out of the lock.

I put my hand on Melinda's arm, and led her to the table.

"You will empty your pocket," I said, "and give this gentleman the contents."

She drew out and put into Robins' hand, first a handkerchief, then a photograph of my son, and thirdly the diamond crescent. There it lay sparkling at us like the baleful eyes of a snake, and the light from it seemed to spread and brighten, until it filled all the room, and dazzled me and I could see nothing. I heard myself say, quite calmly:

"This young lady came with me. I am Mrs. Fane. Send at once for Lady Willoughby," and after that I heard and saw no more.

When I came to myself I was at the open window of another room, the cold air blowing about my ears, and Lady Willoughby's face, pale and anxious, bending over me. Sir John was in the background with Melinda. No one else was present.

The whispering crowd had gone, and I was alone with my old friends and the woman who was to be my son's wife, and who had found the diamond crescent in her pocket. I had been unconscious for some time, but I recovered my recollection in an instant.

"The lady in pink is a relation, I suppose?" I said bitterly, as soon as I could speak.

"My dear! my dear! no!" murmured Augusta. "It is all explained. Pray be calm."

"I am calm," I said, getting on my feet, but I could not stand and fell back helplessly.

"Tell me," I said to Sir John, "or I shall go mad."

Melinda stood silent all this time, and made no effort to help me.

"Of course that woman slipped the crescent into her pocket," Sir John explained. "Robins understood it in an instant. His attention was called by Mr. Webber, your vicar, you know, and in that instant the crescent went. The woman was not quick enough, saw the game was up, and got rid of the diamonds and was gone; and Robins is just mad at losing her. It's all right," patting my hand, "as clear as daylight. It will be in all the papers to-morrow, and in a week our friend in pink will be trapped, you'll see she will."

"In all the papers!" I groaned. "Of course, and our likenesses, I suppose, Melinda and mine and perhaps my son's, too."

"You said Mr. Webber?" I asked faintly. "What has he to do with it?"

"Everything," returned Sir John. "Great idiot! He ought to have known better than to talk to Robins at all."

"Mr. Webber was not here," I said. "If you mean the man with the black eyes and scarred lip, he is no more our vicar than I am."

Nor was he. He had introduced himself, when he had seen me safely carried out of the way, and had taken in the great Robins himself and Sir John like a pair of babies, and what is more, he had assisted in the cross questioning of Melinda, and had heard her prompt answer, when Robins had asked her if she could swear to the woman in pink if she met her again.

Melinda had answered bravely, she had shown great presence of mind the Willoughbys said, when the first shock was over. "Yes, I should know her anywhere," and added, "she has eyes of two colors; one is blue and one brown. I noticed it distinctly."

After that reply, the reputed Mr. Webber remembered an engagement and left, while Robins and Number Thirty gave themselves up to rejoicing.

This woman was a noted thief, it appeared, and they had long been on her track. The chase was about over now, for all that remained to be done now was to bring her face to face with Melinda; a dozen people had seen her turn from the table of diamonds and fall against us, and Colonel Fairfax, Augusta's brother, had seen and would swear to it, a piece of lace hanging to a button on her sleeve, and had wondered how it got there, as she made her way quickly past him in the next room; a corresponding strip of lace was missing from the trimming on Melinda's gown.

Here was the case in a nutshell, for I could testify that my young friend had not moved from my side, and one of the cleverest women thieves in London would be led into a safe retirement by Melinda and by me. Yes, I was to figure in this nine day's wonder, side by side with my future daughter-in-law.

"When this is over," I said to Augusta, "I shall travel for three years. I shall go to India."

"My dear, my dear!" sighed Augusta again.

"I have wired to Arthur," put in Sir John, "he will be with you to-night perhaps."

At the thought of my son, I quite broke down and cried as feebly as Lady Willoughby herself might have done. To feel Arthur's strong hand in mine and to look up, a long way up, into his honest face and hear the ring of his voice through the house.

"Oh, thank Heaven he is coming," I sobbed, "in spite of everything," with a side look at Melinda.

She stood like a statue and gave me neither word nor look, and Sir John felt called on to take her part. Well, it was to be expected. I know my world. Melinda was a very pretty woman, and I had been pretty thirty years ago—a long cry since then. Every man in the land would have taken her part. Good, bad or indifferent, they would have been all alike in that.

"Miss Meeking has behaved very well," said Sir John, smiling at her. I never saw him look so silly in his life. "Mrs. Fane is agitated of course just now," he added, excusing me to Melinda, "but you know her kind heart."

To this Melinda replied by giving a miserable look at her satin dress and my lace, and saying in a suppressed voice:—"Yes, oh yes, I know that," and then she too began to cry.

My son came the next day, and was to me what he has been all my life, the joy of my heart, the comfort of my existence, but of course I knew he was impatient to be with Melinda, who was waiting for him in the drawing-room, and I did not detain him.

When Arthur can have his own way exactly, he is the most affectionate, unselfish creature in the world. His own way is a necessity to him. In all great matters he must do as he likes, and then the little affairs of daily life he troubles nothing about.

He had had his own way about Melinda, and he showed me that he was grateful. He sympathised with me over our adventure at the wedding, laughed at my horror of publicity, and promised me that none of our portraits should appear in the papers if he could help it; and then he said a few words of all I had done for Melinda. "Thank you, mother, with all my heart, I thank you." And then, "She's upstairs, I suppose?"

And upstairs he went.

They did not leave me alone very long. He brought her down to me in my little sitting room, and I was struck by a great change in her as she came in with her hand in Arthur's. His presence had altered her face, just as a portrait is changed by the touch of a great artist. It is a beautiful mask before he takes up his brush—and afterwards it lives, and a soul looks at you through the eyes that were only painted eyes an hour ago. Thus it was with Melinda.

All her face wanted had been, what we call for want of a better word, expression. The nature of the woman, her heart and soul and the capabilities that were in her character, were now awake, and speaking through her earnest eyes, and in the tremulous curve of her parted lips.

I must own that when I saw her looking up into my son's face, with the fine forgetfulness of self very few women attain to, I recognised in her the nobler nature of the two, and words sprang to my lips in the impulse of the moment, that I never thought I could have said of Melinda and my son.

"I hope you will make her happy, Arthur; you must try."

I was well repaid that evening for any trouble I had taken with Melinda, for Arthur's look of amused surprise as he watched her while we dined quickly changed to an open pleasure and pride in her.

She really had made herself so like me, in manner, I mean, that she might have been my daughter, and her beauty was beyond criticism. She had asked me if she might put on the dress she wore at the wedding. "I want you to see it," she added to Arthur. "It is lovely; your mother gave it to me."

She could not have made a prettier amend for her behavior to me at the Willoughbys'. I heard from my son that Mr. Meeking had come of a good family, and ought to have been a gentleman, and this accounted for his daughter's readiness in adapting herself to her new surroundings that had puzzled me, and for the tact she now and then showed, as in this about her dress.

"You shall take Melinda," I said to Arthur when dinner was announced.

"No," smiling, "I will take you."

And as we walked down the stairs after her, he said to me: "It is a lovely dress. Thank you, little mother."

That was a happy evening.

Arthur talked and we listened. Melinda putting in a word very softly now and then, or a question that led him on to be more amusing than ever.

He held up his glass when we were alone—I had thought the occasion good enough for some of his dear father's dry champagne—and looking at me, "Your health, mother!" he said.

And Melinda lifted her glass of water to her lips and bowed prettily to me, and tears suddenly sprang into her eyes—they did not fall, but I saw them.

"You have no wine?" I said to her.

"I—I—never touch it," she faltered, and I remembered she never did, and Arthur told me why later on.

I had plied the wrong person when I had plied that old Mrs. Meeking with her cloudy blue eyes. She drank like a fish, and made Melinda's life a burden to her, as she had done her father's before her.

Melinda sang to us when we went upstairs, and Arthur came and sat by me before the fire, and best time to the song with his hand on mine, and my thoughts wandered back in the past, and his carried him on into a happy future, and presently Melinda's delicious voice rose softly into a note of exquisite pathos.

"'It hath a dying fall,'" quoted Arthur, and so it had, and the words haunt me to this day.

The voice died away into silence and the song ended. It was the last Melinda ever sang to me. Arthur was obliged to return to Aldershot the next morning, and hard, indeed, he found it to say goodbye.

"I dread leaving her," he said to me when they had parted. "She is the only person who can identify that woman, and they know it. There is danger in that," he added.

It was my turn now to act the comforter and reason him out of his fears.

"Take care of her," were his last words, and I did my best, though, alas! I failed.

Yes, he loved her dearly, there is no doubt of it, but he forgot her before I did. He is a happy man, to-day, with wife and children round him, and I am an old woman, rather lonely as time goes on, and mine is a better memory than his, for days gone by.

Arthur had not left us an hour when Mr. Robins was announced. He was shown into my sitting-room. Evidently in a great hurry, and in one startling sentence he told me what had brought him.

"Mrs. Bailey is safe at Burrington," he exclaimed, and looked at me as if I ought to feel delighted.

"Mrs. who?—is where?" I returned quite bewildered.

"Oh, beg pardon. I have so little time, you see. I mean the woman in pink. She is down at Burrington. Lord Burring gives a big ball to-night, and she is on the look out—will try to be there, you know. Now I want Miss Meeking to go down by the 4.15. I'll take her down, meet her at Waterloo, take her to the hotel, swear to Mrs. Bailey—and—and that's all."

All, indeed.

I sent for Melinda and she took it very composedly. Of course she could go—and would. The journey was short—an hour only, and she would be back again before eight o'clock.

"I owe that woman a grudge," she said with a sparkle in her handsome eyes. "She gave me the most wretched moment in my life. It was a coward's trick—to palm her theft off upon me."

Robins looked at her admiringly.

"It was," he said, "and if you knew her history you would be proud to help us. At 4.15, then. Ladies, good day."

I may tell you here that Mrs. Bailey did go to the Burrings' ball and made off with a pearl pendent and a diamond clasp. She managed better than she had done at the Willoughbys', and nobody suspected her at the time.

Mr. Robins had the pleasure though of arresting her a year or two later, but her accomplices, who had saved her from being arrested before by an atrocious murder, escaped, and are at large to this day.

I took Melinda to Waterloo, but there was no Mr. Robins there, only a telegram from him given me by a railway official, regretting he could not come, detained by sudden urgent business.

One of his men, Inspector Barnes, would meet Miss Meeking at Burrington, and would come back with her to town. Reluctantly I let her go—I would have gone with her myself, but she knew that I had an engagement at home and would not hear of it.

"I am so used to travel alone," she said smiling. "It is nothing, really nothing to think of for a moment." So he went.

As the train moved off, a man in the car next to Melinda's, put his head out of the window and stared at me, and spoke to a friend who was seeing him off.

Melinda was waving her hand to me, and I only glanced at the man, but I had time to notice what an unpleasant looking person he was—big and burly, with a red face and black hair.

His friend and I turned round at the same moment and came face to face, and I met an evil look from a pair of morose black eyes that certainly I had seen before.

When I was in the brougham and driving home I remembered where. This man was young and had no scar on his lip, but the clergyman at the Willoughby wedding had the same eyes in his head, he who had passed himself off as our vicar, Mr. Webber.

And his companion was on his way down to Burrington, and Melinda was alone, and the early dusk of a January afternoon had begun to close in upon us.

I did not keep my engagement that evening. I shopped a little on my way home, and had not taken off my things when a telegram came to me from Inspector Barnes, "You are wanted at Burrington. Come at once."

I caught the express, and I stood on the draughty platform of the little country station soon after seven. The lamps flared in a bitter east wind, and the sleet and rain stung my face. Inspector Barnes met me and gave me his arm, and I was thankful to lean upon it. He took me to a room in a little inn close to the station. There were three men there. One said to me:

"I am Dr. Thorne."

"Tell me all," I replied; "do not keep me in suspense."

And very quietly and kindly he told me. The 4.15 train stopped once only, at a small station between Waterloo and Burrington. Melinda gave up her ticket there, and all was well with her then. The guard noticed a man with black hair and a red face get on and loiter about the

platform, and as the train began to move, he jumped in again, after a porter had called out to him to be quick. He got in, it is supposed, to the carriage with Melinda. He was not seen again. A mile further on a steep incline leads into a tunnel. The trains always go slowly there for about three minutes. When the train reached Barrington the guard found Inspector Barnes on the platform, who told him he was waiting for a young lady from Waterloo.

"She is in there, somewhere," said the guard, pointing to the car behind him—and there Barnes found her.

She was leaning back with her head on one side. He thought, at first, she was asleep.

Two days ago she had stood in all the pride of her beauty, and snatched off the red band from her white throat with a shudder.

"It looks like blood," she had said. Across that throat there was another line of red now.

She was still breathing when she was found, and lived until I came to her.

"Her injuries are not in themselves fatal," said Dr. Thorne, as he opened the door of an inner room. "She has succumbed to loss of blood and shock to the system, and is sinking fast, poor girl. She is conscious now, and knows you are coming. We wired to Robins for your address."

He stepped back, and I stood alone, looking down on the white face on the pillows. The dark eyes turned wistfully to mine, and she tried to raise one hand and touch me.

"It is best like this," she whispered. "He might have been ashamed of me some day."

Her voice was sinking very low, I could hardly hear the words, and so changed in tone, the music of her voice was lost in this world, for ever.

"Think of me now and then. Do not let him quite forget me."

My tears answered for me as I kissed her cold cheek.

Her eyes closed, then opened once again and looked at me for the last time on earth.

"His mother and mine," she sighed—and was gone.

The Veiled Singer?

BY C. E. J.

THE sun was setting in golden glory over the sea, shedding its gorgeous light across the little bay, and touching the brown sails of the fishing-boats with gentle caress.

Beside an open window Lilian Dacre sat noting none of Nature's loveliness. Her heart was heavy, for in that tiny room her father lay dying.

"Nourishing food and wine" had been the doctor's verdict; but nothing short of a miracle could procure these, and as she looked at the white face on the pillow, a sob rose in the girl's throat. That he—her father—should be in need!

The sound of a violin played out of tune, and a harsh grating voice reached her on the still air. A man and a woman were traversing the street, and the girl noticed how windows were opened and coins thrown to the discordant singer. If such a voice could bring money, surely——

She glanced towards the bed—her father was sleeping quietly—and leaving the room, she robed herself in a long black cloak, and winding a thick lace scarf about her head so as to entirely conceal her face, she noiselessly left the house and hastened with unsteady steps towards the promenade. Opposite one of the large houses she took her stand, and began to sing—

The windows before her were open, and at one he saw a sweet childish face with dark eyes, watching intently. For this little listener Lilian sang, gaining courage as she went on, and so absorbed was she that she never saw the two young men who crossed the road and paused beside her. She started when a coin was put into her hand, and the two passed slowly up the path.

In her palm she caught the glitter of gold. Only a moment she hesitated; honesty overcame her timidity, and running after the strangers, she touched her benefactor gently.

"You have given me gold," she said.

Erle Warrender turned. She was too closely veiled for him to see her face, but he noted that her trembling fingers were white and slender.

"Evidently surprised at her good fortune, Warrender," laughed the other. "You shouldn't waste your substance on any street singer who happens to have a decent voice. You——"

Warrender silenced him with a gesture.

"I knew it was gold," he said gently. "Keep it, please—you have given my little sister such a treat." He glanced at the child in the window, and Lilian's eyes followed his. Then with a little sob:

"Heaven bless you!" she cried. "You don't know what you have done this night."

Erle Warrender had shaken off the trammels of society to take the little delicate Nellie down to the quiet seaside village, where the health-giving breezes brought new life to the child. His friends wondered why Erle did not marry, his mother was constantly worrying him to take a wife, but he knew there was only one woman in the world for him, and surely she was a "dream bride."

He had only seen her once, in a handsomely appointed carriage in the Park, but the sweet girl face was imprinted on his memory, and though he had not discovered the name of his divinity, he cherished a hope of finding her some day. Until then, marriage was not for him.

"Ah, she is there! My veiled lady!"

Nellie's voice attracted him to the wide bay window, where the child's couch was drawn.

"I am so glad, Erle; I thought she was never coming back."

The young man took a seat behind her, whence he could see the same girlish figure whose beautiful voice had attracted his notice.

A week had passed, and Nellie had watched in vain. The singer had forsaken the promenade, but now—a glance assured her of the child's presence—she began her song. The two listeners were enthralled, and Warrender started when the door opened to admit Jim Thorpe.

"Hullo," he said, "listening to the fair unknown?"

"Yes. Have you heard her, Jim?"

"Rather. The veiled singer is the fashion; she's had crowded audiences every night on the beach. There's a mystery about her, Erle, my boy. It's a joke she's playing; she can't need the money, her hands are white and soft as a lady's."

Erle didn't answer. He recalled her broken words, "You don't know what you have done this night." Lady or not, she needed the money sadly then.

He leaned forward to throw a coin into the corner of her cloak, in which the girl was deftly catching the money showered upon her, but catching sight of his face, she drew back and moved away.

"Oh, sing—sing again!" cried Nellie. "Erle, don't let her go yet!"

The words must have reached the girl, for she paused, then still from a distance, continued her song, the glorious notes floating back on the evening air.

Again and again she came, but always when he was out, and Erle only heard of her advent from his sister. Evidently she would take nothing at his hands, and the young man found himself wondering if his friend's words were true—if, after all, it was a "joke."

One evening as he returned along the promenade, the black figure rose from a seat and suddenly confronted him. Instinctively raising his hat, he waited for her to speak, but she seemed to have difficulty in finding words. Her fingers toyed with the end of the scarf that veiled her face, and Erle saw that she was strangely agitated.

"What can I do for you?" he said gently. Then she found her tongue.

"I wanted to thank you," she said, "for your goodness. You could not know, but that night—my father was dying—we were starving—and you—you saved us and first gave me hope."

"I am glad," he said simply. "But why did you not come again?—or coming, why refuse my small help?"

She clasped her hands tightly.

"I sang for your little sister. It was the only way I could thank you. You had been so good to me, and now we are going away."

"Going away? But you will sing again for Nell?" he pleaded. "It is her greatest pleasure. You will come once again?"

"Yes," she said. "I will come once again."

The glorious day had faded, and sullen clouds filled the sky. The hollow boom of the waters presaged a storm, and by 8 o'clock the rain was descending heavily, and the distant rumble of thunder was plainly heard. Nellie lay on her couch, peering with eager eyes into the darkening night.

"She won't come, Erle. She cannot come such a dreadful night."

"Of course she can't," said he, sharply, striving to rid himself of the feeling of disappointment that consumed him.

But even as he spoke, a voice—full and sweet—rose above the splash of the waves, calling forth a delighted cry from Nellie. In spite of the storm, she had kept her word.

For the one intent little listener she sang, and the beautiful notes rang out above the storm, drawing the young man hastily to the window. There she stood, in the pelting rain. She should not be there—he would go and fetch her in.

Erle tore downstairs, and dashing out into the storm, caught the startled girl as she was preparing to fly.

"Indeed, I won't come in. I will run back," she said, striving to release her hands from his strong grasp, and looking at him with beautiful, unveiled eyes.

"Do you think I will let you go? Do you think I will lose you again?" he said, with a quiet force that startled her. And bewildered, uncomprehending, she perforce yielded to his stronger will, and suffered him to lead her into the house.

"I don't understand," she said helplessly when they gained shelter. "You don't know me. I never saw you until that night——"

"But I saw you. Your face has haunted me, and though I did not even know your name, I knew you were the only woman I would make my wife. I would stake my all to win you. Give me my chance—don't send me away just when I have found you."

* * * * * *

"So the story of Dacre's smash was all fudge, was it?"

"Not quite. He lost heavily through some speculation, and they say it got on his brain that he had lost everything and was ruined. But things were exaggerated; something was saved, though he isn't the C. as was that he was."

"And the lovely Lilian?"

"Is now Mrs. Erle Warrender. He fell in love with her in their starvation days, and after nursing her back to health, she very properly rewarded him by marrying him, and bringing him a tidy little fortune, too. Oh, yes, Erle has done very well for himself."

"Hist! Here they come!"

The speakers drew back as Erle and his bride entered the crowded reception, unconscious that their remarks had been overheard. But Erle stooped to whisper in his wife's ear, with a proud tender smile:

"Well, indeed! What should I have done, Lilian, had I never met the veiled singer?"

PURPOSE.—It is a common mistake to judge of character wholly by the emotions, desires and affections. They form a large part of it certainly. He who loves good and hates evil, who wishes to do right, whose intentions are pure, and whose impulses are excellent, is of course a very different kind of person from one whose inclinations lead him in an opposite direction, and is far more estimable.

Yet we cannot afford to omit in our estimate that strength of purpose which carries out the desires and converts unformed hopes into actions and realities. Some persons are so constituted that this process follows on instinctively.

No sooner is a purpose formed than the means to fulfil it are chosen, adopted, and set to work. Conscious of a need, they begin at once to supply it. If they espouse a principle, they live up to it; if they favor a reform, they help to promote it; if they are indignant at some injustice, they set about preventing it.

Others, satisfied with a good intention, postpone its fulfilment indefinitely; they think the work is almost done when they have decided to do it; whereas this idea is the very hindrance which often prevents it from being done at all.

THE Sultan of Turkey is said to be the most extravagant housekeeper in the world. According to an estimate his domestic budget runs thus: Repairs, new furniture, mats, beds, etc., 15,000,000 francs; toilet requisites, including rouge and enamels for the ladies of the harem, and jewelry, 50,000,000 francs; extra "extravagances," 65,000,000 francs; clothes and furniture for the Sultan personally, 10,000,000 francs; douceurs and wages, 20,000,000 francs; gold and silver plate, 12,500,000 francs; maintenance of five carriages and horses, 2,500,000 francs—a total of 175,000,000 francs, or about $30,000,000 yearly.

At Home and Abroad.

A Parisian who suspects that the food or drink which he has purchased is adulterated can have the article analyzed free of cost at the municipal laboratory. If impurities are found, the city undertakes the prosecution of the tradesman, and, after conviction, the offender is not only liable to fine and imprisonment, but may be obliged to display in his window a sign reading, "Convicted of Adulteration."

A gentleman who had often wondered, like so many others, what became of the old-style bicycle, made a discovery recently which throws some light on the problem. During a ramble in some woods he came across a small saw-mill, and to his astonishment, found that the motive power for it was supplied by a young man and one of the big wheels in vogue before the safety appeared. The wheel was suspended from the ceiling, and connected with the mill machinery by a belt. The young man sat on the seat of the wheel, working the pedals with his feet, and in this way kept the saw in motion for hours, while he read a book.

Researches have shown that when in sleep the surface of the brain becomes pale, indicating the withdrawal of blood, and that awaking is accompanied by a return of color. The ingenious experiments of an eminent Italian physiologist, prove the same thing in another way. He constructed a couch so arranged that it could be accurately balanced in the middle, when the slightest change of weight would make either end incline. A man was laid upon it balanced in a horizontal position. As he went to sleep his head rose and his feet sank; as he awoke the opposite occurred, proving that the blood left the head in the one condition and returned to it in the other.

Not long since, a certain clock manufacturer discovered that a rival was doing a large trade in cheap clocks, sent out to the wilds of Africa. He got hold of a sample, and finding that there was a big profit on the enterprise, invested a large sum of money in making a better article, thousands of which were shipped to the same market. Strange to say, sales were very slow, while his rival, turning out a cheaper and far less accurate timepiece, was selling all he could make. Finally the explanation came. Savages like noise. The clock made by the original exporter had a particularly loud and aggressive tick; his imitator made a better clock, but it was almost noiseless, and the savages would have none of it. The remedy was simple. The next shipload that was despatched ticked louder than anything previously heard, and all was well.

Deafness Cannot be Cured.

by local applications, as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure Deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube gets inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed Deafness is the result, and unless the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing will be destroyed forever; nine cases out of ten are caused by catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces.

We will give One Hundred Dollars for any case of Deafness (caused by catarrh) that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure. Send for circulars, free.

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The Ladies' Home Journal

Philadelphia

Our Young Folks.

MATS AND FURRY.

BY FRANCESCA.

"PATIENCE! like the young bears, your troubles have yet to come." Many little folks may have heard this proverb before, without having any idea of its origin, or why the young bears' troubles should have been selected before all others, so I may say that I believe this is how the proverb came to be used.

In the days of old, in a snug cave lived Papa and Mamma bear and their two children, Mats, the son, and Furry, the daughter.

The young bears had arrived at that age when they become inquisitive, and think that they can do everything as well as their parents, if not better; and they were constantly asking their father and mother about the life away from the cave, and proposing that they should go out and take their part in seeking the daily provisions, and the old folk used as constantly to reply, "Patience, your troubles have yet to come."

This did not at all satisfy the young folk, and when alone, they held much consultation together, and puzzled their brains as to why they must wait, how the troubles would come, and chiefly and lastly, what were troubles.

Their mother often asked their father of an evening if he had had any troubles, and he nearly as often said that he had, and especially, one evening, he told her that a small pig that he brought in had given him a deal of trouble, when he caught it. Therefore, argued Mats, troubles must be something to eat; and it was too bad that they should have to wait in the cave till it came to them, whilst their father and mother could get some nearly every day that they went out.

At last, one day, after a deal of consultation, they agreed that they would ask and know positively what troubles were, and so settle the matter; but here arose another difficulty, viz., who was to ask, and who was to be asked?

"You had better ask mother, as you are her favorite," said Furry.

"No," answered Mats; "you had better ask father; he will tell you anything." And Furry, being the gentler of the two, gave way.

She waited till next day, and as her father was getting ready to go out after breakfast, "Father," said she, "what are troubles?"

"Vexations, my dear; but don't bother me now, I'm busy," said he; and then he went out.

Mats was waiting anxiously at the back of the cave, and as Furry went towards him with a puzzled air, he bounced out with, "Well, what are troubles? I heard him tell you."

"Vexations," answered Furry, very slowly.

"Wh-a-a-t? And what are vexations?" cried Mats.

"I don't know; but they are what father said troubles were," said Furry; "but you had better ask mother, and we will be all right then."

"I suppose I must, now," grumbled Mats; "but it was very stupid of you not to ask father more about it."

"He told me not to bother him, and then went out," replied Furry, quietly, as she settled herself for a nap.

Mats did not much like the idea of asking his mother, for he thought it looked as if he were ignorant; and he particularly did not want his father to hear him asking her; so he put it off till next morning; and when his mother was following his father out of the cave, he ran after her, and stopped her.

"Oh, mother," said he, "will you please tell me what vexations are?"

"Afflictions, my son," replied his mother; "but don't stop me now, your father is calling me."

Mats went back into the cave slower, and more puzzled than Furry had been the day before. She was waiting for him.

"Now, dear Mats," cried she, "do you know all about it?"

"No," answered Mats sulkily; "vexations are afflictions. Now you know as much as I do."

"Dear me, we shall never find it out," sighed Furry.

"Never," quickly returned Mats, "unless you get it out of father to-night; and you might do such a little thing as that, Furry."

She, always ready to please her brother, readily promised to do so, and the two were soon busy at play together.

In the evening, when the old bears had had their dinner, and were resting, Furry began to play about near her father, seeking for an opportunity to ask the important question; but he happened not to be in a very good humor, and her play at last, irritating him, he told her and Mats to go to bed.

"In a moment, dear father," said Furry; "but will you please answer me one question first?"

"Only one, then," said her father. "Well, what is it?"

"Please tell Mats and me what afflictions are?"

"Troubles, little one!" at once answered both parents at once. "Now trot off; yours have yet to come."

Furry who had nearly fallen on her back with dismay at the answer, followed Mats to bed, unable to say a word; but the latter out of temper, both with Furry and his parents, kept up such a grumbling to himself, that in the morning he would have an answer—it was too bad to be put off in that way; and made such a muttering to himself, that at last he was sent to bed in another corner of the cave, which did not improve his temper, and only made him the more determined to have his answer in the morning. Consequently, next day, when they were all at breakfast, "Father," said he, in a firm tone, "are troubles good to eat?"

"They are not," said his father, "nor to drink either; they are what all bears try to avoid and flee from. Now don't ask about troubles any more; yours will come quite soon enough."

When the old bears had gone out, Mats walked up and down the cave for some time. At last he said, "Furry, I am going out to look for troubles; will you come? It is no use our waiting here for them; father and mother won't bring any home for us, and they won't tell us what they are."

The morning was fine, the sun shone bright, and the singing of the birds and the fresh air raised the spirits of the little bears, so that they trotted on merrily for some time, till at last Furry complained that she felt very tired, and so hungry that she wished they had brought some food with them from the cave.

Mats gallantly proposed that she should lie down and rest, while he looked about to see if he could find anything to eat; and Furry, having made herself comfortable on some moss and leaves, he pushed a little further into a thicket before them, and had not gone far before he heard a grunting noise. He advanced cautiously, and saw a number of young pigs rooting at the foot of a large tree; softly he crept towards them, till he got near enough, and then with a spring he jumped upon one of them and killed it.

"Now," he exclaimed with pride, "father can never say again that I can't hunt."

"Capitally caught!" said a voice behind him. "Well done."

Mats wheeled around rather frightened, and saw a fox creep out of the brushwood and come towards him."

"Well done, my friend, well done!" said the fox; "I congratulate you; you must be an old hunter indeed."

"No," replied Mats, blushing as much as a young bear can blush. "I assure you I never was away from our cave before to-day, when my sister and I came out to look for some troubles."

"So young and yet so clever!" exclaimed the fox. "I should greatly like to be of some service to you. Is there anything that I can do for you or show you?"

Mats, who had been gazing at the fox in great admiration, hesitated for a little while; but on the fox again assuring him of his anxiety to serve him, he said, "If you could show me a trouble, I should be much obliged to you; and oh! could you please tell me how you got such a beautiful tail? for father says if a bear could only get a tail like that he would be made King of the Bears."

"I will show you a trouble, with pleasure," said the fox; "and as for my tail, don't be uneasy; yours will become just like it. Of course, it was stretched when you were young, was it not? Stay, let me look at it." And going behind Mats, he exclaimed, "I do declare it was not Tehuti Tehuti! What carelessness! But I don't think it is too late now, though it certainly ought to have been done sooner. Just let me fasten this piece of wood to it, will you?"

Mats agreed, and the fox, taking part of a creeping plant growing near, tied a piece of a stout branch about three feet long by the middle to his tail.

"Now," said he, pointing up into the tree, "do you see that fork in that low bough there? Just you climb up there, and let yourself drop quietly through it to the ground; it is not far, and the stick behind will give your tail a little jerk, and stretch it a little, and you can repeat the experiment as often as you like, till your tail is long enough."

Mats, in high spirits at the thought of becoming King of the Bears, soon climbed the tree to the bough, and when he got to the fork, let himself drop gently through it; when lo and behold! the stick caught in the fork, and he swung in the air, suspended by his tail as if he were hung up to dry.

"O-o-o-o!" roared Mats. "Help! help! let me down!"

"No hurry," laughed the fox. "You wanted to see a trouble, and now you have a good one; and I have a fine little pig, for which I beg you will accept my most grateful thanks." And so saying, he disappeared into the thicket, dragging the pig after him.

On the departure of the fox, Mats redoubled his cries, which had the effect of bringing Furry quickly on the spot, who, seeing her brother swinging in the air by his tail, at once climbed the tree, and soon released him, when he fell heavily to the ground. Furry came down and asked him how he had got into such a plight.

"I had caught you such a beautiful pig," said he, "when an animal with such a splendid tail came up to me and told me that he would show me a trouble and make my tail like his, and now he has stolen the pig and gone away."

Both the little bears thought they had gone through enough for one day, so they got up and started for home.

They had not gone far before Mats stopped near a large, rotten, dead tree, the top of which had been broken off in some storm or other. "I smell honey!" said he.

"Where? Oh, how delightful!" cried Furry, jumping for joy.

Mats began to climb the tree, and when he got to the place where it had been broken off, "Here it is!" cried he, and turning around, he started on his way down inside the tree, going backwards, as the custom of the bears is. Furry immediately set to work to climb the tree also, but she had not gone far when a heavy fall took place inside, and she heard Mats crying, "I've got them, Furry; Furry, I've got them; and such quantities!" And then followed a great commotion and scrambling inside the tree.

Furry, greatly excited, climbed up to the hole as fast as she could, and met Mats just coming out. "What have you got, Mats?" she asked.

"Troubles, troubles! Run home quick, I am stung," cried he. "They are awful," and he pushed his way out of the hole past her, followed by a cloud of bees, which at once attacked both him and Furry furiously.

Mats and Furry never stopped till they had reached home, where they found their parents anxiously waiting from them. The latter immediately questioned the children as to where they had been, and they told them all their adventures; and when they had done, their mother said, "All these troubles that have come upon you serve you quite right; you ought to have had patience, and waited till I had time to explain to you what troubles were."

"Father said they were vexations, and we did not know what those were," pouted Furry.

"He did, my dear. And were you not put out and disappointed by the lot of bees? That was a vexation and a little trouble; or rather, I may say, an affliction, for did not the loss of the pig cause him sorrow, which is pain of mind, and he knows best if he had any pain of body when he was swinging."

"Oh! I was so hurt," cried Mats. "I don't think Furry and I want to go out to-morrow."

The old bears laughed heartily at the young pair, and as they thought the lesson had been enough for them, they said no more.

But the story of Mats' and Furry's adventures got out about the neighborhood, and for a long time the different animals used to tell it to their children to teach them the advantages of patience, always winding up with "patience! like the young bears, your troubles have yet to come," until at last it grew to be the proverb which has been handed down to the present day.

As there are some faults that have been termed faults on the right side, so there are some errors that might be denominated errors on the safe side. Thus we seldom regret having been too mild, too cautious, or too humble; but we often repent having been too violent, too precipitate, or too proud.

The World's Events.

The Chinese preserve eggs by coating them with mud.

Secretary of State Sherman and Mrs. Sherman will celebrate their golden wedding next year.

It is estimated that the death-rate of the world is 67 a minute, and the birth-rate 70 a minute.

Arabic coins have a sentence from the Koran, and generally the Caliph's name, but never an image.

The atmosphere is so clear in Zululand that it is said, objects can be seen by starlight at a distance of seven miles.

Among the 55,000,000 inhabitants of Germany there are only seventy-eight who have passed their hundredth birthday.

Lodging-house keepers in Germany have to give notice to the police immediately on the arrival and departure of any of their guests.

A curiosity has been brought to light in East Friendship, Me.—a man who has kept a diary since January 1, 1870, and never missed a day.

Numismatists say that no human head was impressed on coins until after the death of Alexander the Great. All images before that were of deities.

Seals sleep upon land; they also do so floating upon their backs in the sea. This habit they mostly indulge in when the weather is fine and the sea calm.

When a Russian family moves from one house to another they always rake all the fire from the hearth of the old domicile and carry it in a closed pot to their new residence.

That there is nothing in a name is proved by the fact that Beaver Falls, Pa., has three doctors named Grimm, Ague and Coffin, all of whom enjoy large and paying practices.

It is a poor Chinese dinner that has fewer than twenty courses. Some have forty and fifty, and a few are over a hundred. Guests eat what they please and as much as they please.

Russians are great eaters, and much given to snacks, and a morsel of zakouska (salted fish), with a glassful of spirits, is an invariable prelude to dinner; but no one ever drinks without eating.

St. Louis boasts of a baboon that recently went on a lark, ate sulphur matches, red fire, gold paint and raw eggs, drank bottled beer and ended by throwing eggs at the reflection of himself in a mirror.

A shepherd at Chambery, Savoy, employs a horse instead of a dog to keep the herd together. The horse understands the orders given him and carries them out as intelligently as the best-trained dog.

According to an Indiana reporter, a woman leaned from a car window and asked a man to pick up a ring she has dropped. He did so and discovered from the inscription on the ring that she was his long-lost wife.

John Dieter, of Shelbyville, Ind., when Thomas A. Hendricks was a candidate for Governor of that State bet a coffin that he would be elected. He won the bet, which was paid, and the other day when he died he was buried in a coffin that cost him nothing.

A kind of slave market is said to exist in many country districts of Finland. Once a year such paupers, lunatics, and aged people of each parish as cannot support themselves are put up at public auction, and consigned to those families or farmers who will board them at the lowest price offered by the parish authorities.

The tall Lombardy poplar has a reputation in some parts of Europe as a kind of natural lightning-conductor. Investigations recently made appear to confirm this reputation of the tree. Its wood is an unusually good conductor of electricity as compared with others, while its great height and lack of spreading branches enable it to conduct a lightning stroke straight downward.

BEFORE A GIRL MARRIES

She ought, if possible, to learn to play the piano. Music is a great factor in a home. THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL will send a girl, free of all expense, to any musical conservatory she likes; pay her board and give her a piano in her own room. 300 girls have already been so educated, free.

The Ladies' Home Journal
Philadelphia

COME WHAT MAY.

BY THACKERAY.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will,
And bear it with an honest heart.
Who misses or who wins the prize?
Go lose or conquer as you can,
But if you fall or if you rise,
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

AS THEY USED TO LIVE.

A well known old-time American writer in his recollections of a lifetime tells how they used to live in New England during his youth, some seventy years ago. Money was scarce, he writes, wages being about fifty cents a day, though these were generally paid in meat, vegetables, and other articles of use—seldom in money. There was not a factory of any kind in the place. There was a butcher, but he only went from house to house to slaughter the cattle and swine of his neighbors. There was a tanner, but he only dressed other people's skins; there was a clothier, but he generally fulled and dressed other people's cloth.

Even dyeing blue a portion of the wool, so as to make linsey-woolsey for short gowns, aprons, and blue-mixed stockings—vital necessities in those days—was a domestic operation. During the autumn, a dye-tub in the chimney corner—thus placed so as to be cherished by the genial heat—was as familiar in all thrifty houses, as the Bible or the back-log. It was covered with a board, and formed a cosy seat in the wide-mouthed fireplace, especially of a chill evening.

Our bread was of rye, tinged with Indian meal. Wheat bread was reserved for the sacrament and company. All the vegetables came from our garden and farm. The fuel was supplied by our own woods—sweet-scented hickory, snapping chestnut, odoriferous oak, and reeking, fizzling ash. Sugar was partially supplied by our maple-trees. These were tapped in March, the sap being collected, and boiled down in the woods. This was wholly a domestic operation, and one in which all the children rejoiced.

Rum was largely consumed, but our distilleries had scarcely begun. A half-pint of it was given, as a matter of course, to every day-laborer, more particularly in the summer season. In all families, rich or poor, it was offered to male visitors as an essential point of hospitality, or even good manners. Women—I beg pardon—ladies, took their schnapps, which was the most delicious and seductive means of getting tipsy that has been invented. Crying babies were silenced with hot toddy, then esteemed an infallible remedy for wind on the stomach. Every man imbibed his morning dram, and this was esteemed temperance.

There is a story of a preacher about those days, who thus lectured his parish: "I say nothing, my beloved brethren, against taking a little bitters before breakfast, and after breakfast, especially if you are used to it. What I contend against is this dramming, dramming, dramming, at all hours of the day."

We raised our own flax, rotted it, hackled it, dressed it, and spun it. The little wheel, turned by the foot, had its place, and was as familiar as if it had been a member of the family. The wool was also spun in the family, partly by my sisters, and partly by a daughter of our neighbor, the town carpenter. I remember her well as she sang and spun aloft in the attic. In those days, church singing was one of the fine arts—the only one, indeed, which flourished, except the music of the drum and fife. The choir was divided into four parts, ranged on three sides of the meeting-house gallery.

Twice a year, that is, in the spring and autumn, the tailor came to the house and fabricated the semi-annual stock of clothes for the male members—this being called "whipping the cat." Mantuamakers and milliners came in their turn, to fit out the female members of the family. There was a similar process as to boots and shoes.

At the period of my earliest recollections, men of all classes were dressed in long, broad-tailed coats, with huge pockets, long waistcoats, and breeches. Hats had low crowns, with broad brims—some so wide as to be supported at the sides with cords. The stockings of the parson, and a few others, were of silk in summer and worsted in winter; those of the people were generally of wool, and blue and gray mixed. Women dressed in wide bonnets—sometimes of straw and sometimes of silk; the gowns were of silk, muslin, gingham, etc.—generally close and short-waisted, the breast and shoulders being covered by a full muslin kerchief. Girls ornamented themselves with a large white Vandyke.

Tavern haunting—especially in winter, when there was little to do—was common, even with respectable farmers. Marriages were celebrated in the evening, at the house of the bride, with a general gathering of the neighborhood, and usually wound off by dancing. Everybody went, as to a public exhibition, without invitation.

Funerals generally drew large processions, which proceeded to the grave. Here the minister always made an address, suited to the occasion. If there was any thing remarkable in the history of the deceased, it was turned to religious account in the next Sunday's sermon. Singing meetings, to practise church music, were a great resource for the young, in winter.

Balls at the taverns were frequented by the young; the children of deacons and ministers attended, though the parents did not. The winter brought sleighing, skating, and the usual round of indoor sports.

DELICATE PERCEPTIONS.—Some persons appear to know intuitively the fitting thing to be said or done at the moment. They foresee probable effects, and guide themselves accordingly. Others seem to have no such insight. They blunder along, failing to produce the effects they desire, often irritating those whom they wish to please, and producing impressions which they would gladly avoid, and by which they often do themselves great injustice. Yet, although quick and delicate perceptions cannot suddenly be gained by those who have them not, they can be cultivated, like any other power. Though the natural man may never attain to the same degree of tact which his more sensitive neighbor instinctively exhibits, he may, by patient self-culture, greatly diminish the difference between them.

Grains of Gold.

By doing nothing we learn to do ill.

A woman hates a question, but loves to ask one.

Adversity borrows its sharpest sting from our impatience.

God never made a law without also making a penalty for its violation.

Too much insensibility creates unhappiness; too much insensibility creates crime.

Good manners are a part of good morals; and it is *no* much your duty as your interest to practise both.

I look upon the simple and childish virtues of veracity and honesty as the root of all that is sublime in character. Speak as you think, be what you are, pay your debts of all kinds.

As a soul in heaven may look back on earth, and smile at its past sorrows, so, even here, it may rise to a sphere where it may look down on the storm that once threatened to overwhelm it.

Femininities.

The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother.

A man to rule a woman must be strong enough not to use his strength.

Scent sprinkled upon pieces of pumice stone may be conveniently used to perfume clothing.

Young Maid: "What is the best time to marry?" Old Maid: "Whenever the man is willing."

Every girl believes in her heart that she is better looking than other people think she thinks she is.

When a woman thinks she has convinced a man that he was wrong, she has generally only tired him out.

The Man: "I wonder if your father would have me for a son-in-law?" The Maid: "Very likely. Papa and I always disagree."

An English girl child was christened Gladys Blank. "Because," said her father, "Sorry is Blank that she isn't a boy."

Queen Marguerite of Italy has started a society for the improvement of ragged street children. Her Majesty desires that each child should be taught some useful trade.

"I think it's absurd to say kissing is dangerous," gushed Mrs. Lilytop. "What possible disease could be spread by the simple act?" "Marriage, madam," grunted Grumpy.

Miss Plott is a colored woman who is a successful Chicago lawyer. She speaks several languages and is much patronized by foreigners. Her practice is confined almost entirely to office work.

A beautiful inscription, it is said, may be found in an Italian graveyard: "Here lies Etelia, who transported a large fortune to Heaven in acts of charity, and has gone thither to enjoy it."

Mrs. Tiff: "Why don't you get married, Miss Prim?" Miss Prim: "I am a manhater." Mrs. Tiff: "That is all the more reason why you should marry. How else can your hatred manifest itself?"

Mrs. Gladstone is six months older than Queen Victoria. Baroness Burdett-Coutts is five years older, and Lady Louise Tighe, who was at the ball the night before the battle of Waterloo, was a girl when the Queen was born.

The Cherokee Indian form of marriage is, perhaps, the simplest and most expressive of any. The man and woman merely join hands over a running stream, emblematic of the wish that their future lives, hopes, and aspirations should flow on in the same channel.

A young lady who was describing to one of her friends a great disappointment which she had experienced, remarked—"I was almost killed by it. I could have cried myself to death." "Did you cry?" asked the other. "No; I was just getting ready to, when the dinner-bell rang."

It is generally observed that persons of about forty years, especially young ladies of that age, are very forgetful of those with whom they were acquainted in childhood. This remarkable dimness of memory has been appropriately styled, "The darkness of the middle ages."

To find the shortest way to a female heart under any circumstances: First case. If she is married, but not a mother, praise her husband. If she is married, and also a mother, praise her children. Second case. If she is unmarried, and engaged, praise her lover. If she is unmarried, and disengaged, praise herself.

There is a tradition concerning the crimson wall flower. A beautiful maiden, climbing a garden wall to converse clandestinely with her lover, who was outside, fell to the ground, and her blood sprinkled the flowers at the base of the wall, mottling some, dyeing others wholly crimson. From that day, the wall flowers, before only yellow, have been crimson and yellow spotted.

Climate has a great effect on the color of the complexion. For example, the Caucasians are of all complexions, according to the climate, but white is the natural color. Thus, a native of northern Europe is fair; of central, less so; of southern, swarthy; a Moor, more so; an Arab, olive; and a Hindu, nearly black. Such of the Hindu women as have never been exposed to the sun are as fair as the inhabitants of the south of Europe.

An autobiography recently published in England is that of "Charlie Wilson," or Catherine Coomes, who masqueraded for forty-two years in male attire in that country. During that time she was married to two women and they lived with her for years without betraying the secret. As "Charlie Wilson" she earned $10 a week, though in her own name and proper dress she could obtain but $5. She confesses that her "wives" gave considerable trouble by running her in debt.

Some time ago the clerk at a certain telegraph office receive a telegram which read:

"Miss ——, will you be mine?"

It was delivered to the proper person, and soon the lady herself came tripping into the office to wire her reply. It read:

"Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Ethel."

Twelve words, you see, with the address, and she paid her quarter, and then tripped out again with the sweetest kind of a blush.

Masculinities.

Our main objection to doing many things is because someone else wants us to do them.

Mabel: "Dick has broken his promise.' Ethel: "Never mind; he'll make another just as good."

A Chicago man who permitted a strange woman to faint in his arms lost his diamond shirt stud in the operation.

Man is by nature a cowardly animal, and moral courage shines out as the most rare and the most noble of virtues.

She: "Do you think De Noodle can get into the 'smart' set?" He: "I don't see why he shouldn't; he's not very smart, you know."

In the affairs of life, activity is to be preferred to dignity; and practical energy and dispatch, to premeditated composure and reserve.

A man with knowledge, but without energy, is a house furnished, but not inhabited; a man with energy, but no knowledge, a house dwelt in, but unfurnished.

"How is it that Wildon comes to the club every night now? It used to be that we couldn't get him here once a month." "Oh! he married last autumn and settled down."

When Mr. Labouchere, the English journalist, was in St. Petersburg on one occasion he saw the Dutch Minister dive his hands into the cigars set out for the guests and fill his pockets with them.

"I wouldn't marry you if you had three times the wealth of my father," she said. "I presume you know," he replied with dignity, "that if I had that much money there would be no necessity for me to marry."

Finger-stalls of thin indiarubber are now used by many photographers on the Continent and at home to protect the fingers from the injurious action of chemicals, especially metol, bichromate of potash, and cyanide of potassium.

Ethel: "You say Algy has been heartlessly deceived by a young woman. Did she lead him on to think that she loved him?" May: "Oh no; she led him on to believe that she didn't care a rap for him, and then when he carelessly proposed, accepted him on the spot."

"Turn to God one day before your death," said Rabbi Eliezer. His disciples said, "How can a man know the day of his death?" He answered them, "Then you should turn to God to-day; perhaps you may be dead to-morrow. Thus every day will be employed in turning."

Mrs. Jackson: "Dat's sebenteen lies yo's tole me toe-day, all diffrunt. Yo' am a reg'lar rapskillion!" Rastus Jackson: "Wy, wha' am a rapskillion, mummy?" Mrs. Jackson: "A rapskillion am a young 'un dat's got his fadder's blood in him—dat's wha' a rapskillion am, my son!"

A Bula-Pesth manufacturer lately captured a thief by chemical means. Missing cash from his box day by day, he applied for aid to a chemist, who gave him a powder to sprinkle over the cash every night. The powder possessed the peculiar property of dyeing the skin blue, the color being intensified by washing, and resisting the action of soap. Money was again missing on the next day. The employes were then called and caused to wash their hands, when those of one man turned dark blue, and on being accused he acknowledged the theft.

"Few popular delusions are more widespread than the belief that people about to die are generally in great dread of dissolution," says a well-known physician. "And yet this is unwarranted by experience. Many a medical man can testify that he has not known a single instance of such fear during the whole of his practice; while even in extreme cases, like those of persons partially devoured by wild beasts and apparently beyond all possibility of rescue, this dread was conspicuously absent. Moreover, in some instances that came under my own observation, the dying were anything but heroic in the ordinary affairs of life."

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Latest Fashion Phases.

One of the newest colors in favor is a bright red orange. This shade is used in yoke effect with almost any color, though it harmonizes best with brown and dull reds, but the contrast between it and blue or green is considered eminently warm and suitable for fall and winter. A very pretty gown for fall and winter dinner or house wear was made of bright sapphire blue silk under black grenadine, a yoke of orange velvet being uncovered by the black.

The orange silk petticoat is an even later fancy than those of green or cerise, and these are short enough to be safe from contact with the pavement. The argument advanced is that if the petticoat is pretty it should not be injured from touching the ground any more than should the gown, that you should be able to lift the gown well above the petticoat, the latter garment being left to take care of itself and short enough to escape harm.

Of course it displays the ankles, which settles it for most women. Orange silk lining to gowns is also a fad, and some fine dresses are made with the skirt entirely free, except at the hand, from the silken lining, and that is orange. Here is a chance for a trick, have two bands, and thus get a petticoat out of the lining, since it is the new and favorite color.

Gay colors are not essential, however, to attire for the most exacting "war paint and feathers" functions, and since so many women appear at such occasions in bright colors, an occasional dark colored costume comes into fine contrast. As it would thus be rendered sufficiently conspicuous to receive a general looking over, it needs to be of original and tasteful design.

The average dress would come out safely from such examination. One was cut princess from black moire velour, its wide skirt having a tablier front of black jetted and spangled chiffon.

This was shirred three times at the waist, and each row of shirring was held down with a string of jet beads. The bodice had a draped vest of the chiffon, back and sides being moire velour. The sleeves, too, were of the spangled chiffon, with a gathered ruche along the outside seams.

There is no doubt that chinchilla will again form one of the very popular furs of the winter. It is stylish, refined in effect and very expensive. Silk velvet Russian blouses, capes and jackets will be very much trimmed with this fur. On cloth costumes of dahlia, Russian green, dark blue, or plum color, small pieces of various portions of the bodice look soft and dainty against a clear complexion, be it fair or dark.

Sealskin jackets will be twenty-two and twenty four inches long, and will be made in the blouse style, with sleeves of ordinary width and no giant puffs at the shoulders.

The large sleeves of last season made the sealskin garment an expensive luxury, and fur manufacturers are pleased to return to the moderate pattern. Although there is scarcity of seal fur, it will not be worn to the exclusion of other furs.

The moire Persian and the Persian will be worn extensively in jackets; basques and other garments. The jackets will have high collars and the blouses will be worn with fancy jeweled belts. These belts are of Russian patterns and decorated with high colored jets and sparkling stones.

Fur capes will be worn again, but will be less popular than last season, and shorter. Combinations of seal and Persian and Persian and chinchilla will be popular, and many capes will be ornamented with stone marten tails. Among the novelties which are shown were Persian tight-fitting basques with fox front and tails and heads at the waist. Chinchilla will be used in trimmings for jackets and capes, and fur collars and boas.

A typical French tailor made gown is of rough surface navy blue cloth. Down the front of the skirt, forming a panel which widens towards the bottom, are two rows of fancy braiding, in black silk mixed with silver threads. The bodice is a blouse with a full plait on each side, giving the effect of a vest with puffed revers.

A yoke of cloth braided with silver extends in points half way down each of these odd side plaits, the points outlined with the black and silver braid. The belt was of folded black satin, with filigree buckle of exquisite workmanship. The tight sleeves had cuffs and epaulets braided with black and silver. The high collar of white cloth was edged with sable, as were also the cuffs. The hat worn with this costume was of castor brown felt, turned off the face; a soft mass of blue velvet and black ostrich tips complete the trimming.

In a trousseau sent from Paris for a January bride, the nightgowns were of four different patterns. The first had a deep falling collar composed of insertion and embroidery, edged with torchon lace of the finest quality; the full sleeves were finished with a soft frill of nainsook, edged with lace and headed by a band of insertion, showing an interlacing of pale pink ribbon, touches of which also appeared at the throat. In the second design the neck and shoulder trimming consisted of a mass of delicate frills and insertion arranged in V-shape. The sleeves, from elbow to wrist, were fashioned with alternate rows of lace insertion and puffs of nainsook, showing runners of pale blue ribbon tied in natty bows, while vandyked frills edged with lace fell over the hands. The characteristic of the third pattern was a deep collar cut in points on the shoulders and at the back and front and edged with the finest Swiss embroidery, while the gown was worked with a profusion of small tucks. The fourth was of graceful Empire style, minutely tucked, and drawn in with a girdle of narrow blue ribbon. The frills forming the trimming were edged with beautiful embroidery, headed by a line of veining through which were run ribbons to match the girdle.

If you prefer good plain woolen fabrics to fancy ones for winter wear, you have your wish this season, for amazon cloth and cashmere cloth, of smooth, glossy texture and plain coloring, are quite the order of the day in Paris.

Woollen poplin is also in great favor. The tints most in fashion for all such tissues are first of all blue, in all shades, from indigo and Sevres blue to flax blue. Then there are lovely warm tints of brown, the most novel being coffee, beaver and chartreux, bluish-violet, deep red, and some handsome shades of green, such as fern and olive, the last generally attenuated by some sober black trimming.

All these materials, warm and thick, but very soft and draping well, scarcely admit of any but plain trimmings; mohair braid and galloon are the most suitable.

Do not choose any of these fine cloths or poplins for other than dressy walking or visiting dresses. They are far less proof against dust or rain than mixed woollens of more fanciful textures.

If you want a robe-de-fatigue, take rather some of the new chined cloths, covercoat or whipcord, which are infinitely more durable, and if less beautiful, less likely to change or fade.

Armure and diagonals appear this winter renewed by a pretty combination in their texture, almost imperceptible woollen threads of a lighter shade forming a sort of glazed pattern over the darker ground of the material.

Mordant cloth is also a fancy woollen tissue. Its double woof shows a colored pattern over a black ground.

The contrary effect appears in double fancy serge, the ground of which is of a finer texture. Sevres-blue, purple, or dark crimson, etc., over which are woven undulating stripes in a thicker serge tissue. The black pattern looks exactly as if it had been worked in applique over the colored ground.

In much the same style we have the new passementerie tissues combined so as to give the effect of colored ribbons passed in and out of the meshes of a black mohair net; or again, braided pekin, with black patterns in relief imitating braiding over a striped colored ground.

These last materials, however, can scarcely be classed among the cheap woollens for ordinary wear. Their elaborate texture, as well as their novelty, render them rather expensive; although, on the other hand, they are really less so than plainer fabrics, as they require no trimming at all. They seem particularly suitable for blouse-bodices or boleros.

Skirts are made more clinging than ever in the upper part, quite plain about the hips, but gored so as to be from three to three and a half yards wide at the foot. The chief trimming for dresses of cloth, poplin, and all thick woollens is braiding; or more fashionably still, embroidery; large floral patterns worked in stem-stitch are very much in vogue.

The blouse-bodice is still fashionable, but not slipped inside the skirt as formerly; it is now continued into a short round basque, ganged two or three times round the waist, and confined by a deep belt either round or pointed. It is often trimmed in the upper part with a network of narrow velvet or satin ribbon, to which jet beads and bugles are sometimes added.

Gray in pretty tones and semi-tones is a favorite color of the season. It brings out in contrast the more brilliant colors. The majority of separate skirts are made of gray in repped wool, ladies' cloth, double-faced cashmere and taffeta. With them are worn fancy waists of richly plaited taffetas or velvets, cerise and Roman blue, in fact everything that gives a gay appearance in blouse effect.

Opera hoods of silk lace and velvet are soft, voluminous and becoming. One of deep purple velvet is faced with white silk, which is not visible as the soft folds of the hood are drawn over the coiffure and about the face, where it is softened by deep ruffles of black lace. The cape of the hood, which falls well down over the shoulders, is of white silk, veiled with a wide ruffle of black lace. Violets are in the black lace at the top of the hood and at the throat, where long strings of the black lace have the effect of securing the garment.

A white hood upon which is appliqued—sparingly, not to give it a dark effect—black lace, has many ruffles of white lace about the face, and a little bow of coiled yellow velvet, with an orange-colored flower at the neck, and in the ruffles just above the forehead. There is a fall of white lace from the neck in front over the cape, which is of satin, with appliqued black lace.

The odd waists and skirts that have served so many women longer than they should, are becoming monotonous. Bodices are now made to match the skirts, and are cut slightly low-necked. More care is taken of the toilet generally. The attention paid to the dressing of the hair is attested to by the increased sale of triple looking-glasses.

Hardly any modish woman is now without one, and indeed it is almost impossible to dress the hair perfectly, from all points of view, without the aid of this multiplied reflection.

White tulle, twisted over wire into low spider bows is pretty, but difficult of arrangement. Colored violet ribbon rosettes make very striking hair ornaments. They are charming with jeweled centres all but concealed by the loops. Aigrettes, if worn at all, are fine enough not to be annoying. A perfectly bewitching one is made of almost invisible silver wire, and glistening with little diamond drops.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Bread sauce is used for game and poultry. Put into a double boiler two generous cups of milk and place it over the fire; add a quarter of an onion and one cup of finely sifted bread crumbs; cover the boiler and let the ingredients simmer twenty minutes.

Take out the onion and add one teaspoonful of butter and season with salt, paprika and a tiny pinch of mace. The sauce is then ready to serve. Brown some bread crumbs in melted salted butter and sprinkle them over the fowls when this sauce is served in a separate dish; but if the sauce is poured around the birds, scatter the browned crumbs over the top of the sauce, as well as the fowls.

Salad Cream.—Two teaspoonfuls of sugar, two saltspoonfuls of salt, one teaspoonful of mustard, three tablespoonfuls of cream, two eggs, and half a cupful of vinegar. Cook until thick, and add oil or butter (when taken off) to taste.

Sultana Cake.—One cup of butter, two cups of sugar, four cups of flour, five eggs, one cup of milk, two teaspoonfuls of yeast powder, one pound of Sultana raisins, and one pound of citron, cut very fine. Measure in coffee-cups, and bake in a deep sheet-iron pan in a moderate oven, two and a half or three hours. Be sure it is done in the middle before removing from the oven, as the loaf is large.

Dried Apple Pan-pie.—One quart of dried apples, soaked over night, and stewed tender. Put the apples in a deep, square earthen baking dish in layers, with an equal quantity of stale bread. When the dish is full, put on the top layer, which should be of apples, a tablespoonful of butter, broken in small pieces, and a cupful of sugar, and pour over all a cupful of molasses. Bake the pan-pie an hour in a moderate oven. Use it hot, and, if possible, just before sending to the table pour over it half a cupful of sweet cream.

To look as pretty going as coming seems to be the general feminine ambition this winter, and the determination is noticed particularly in the arrangement of the hair. As much, if not more, attention is now paid to the line about the nape of the neck as to outline of the hair on forehead and temples.

The contour of the head is given serious study, and all that tends to good balance and graceful poise is accepted, while what is unbecoming is rejected with a promptitude that seems to foretell the emancipation of individual taste from the dialectics of tyrannical fashion. To be beautiful is the present delightful mode, regardless of the how—and if not beautiful, at least charming.

There is no set style of coiffure this season, happily for all. But an idea of suitability has asserted itself, and a variety of styles, pretty and correct, for various occasions are recognised.

No one of good taste thinks, for instance, of dressing her hair high on her head and puffing it out with ribbons and feathers for the theatre. The best-dressed woman, with the consideration characteristic of good breeding, arranges the headdress so as not to interfere in the least with the view of those behind her. However, low, flat ornaments are coming into fashion for theatre wear, and the uncovered or simply ornamented head has led our women a step nearer to the ideal theatre audience; that is, the one which, like the English audience, appears with exquisite formality in full dress.

A well-known physician divides fruit into five classes, each possessing a special curative value—the acid, the sweet, the astringent, the oily and the mealy.

Cherries, strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, peaches, apples, lemons and oranges belong to the acid fruits and have great merit. Cherries, however, are prohibited to those who have neuralgia of the stomach; strawberries and raspberries are recommended to those of bilious temperaments and denied to those in whom diabetes is suspected.

Of the sweet fruits the doctor says plums prevent gout and articular rheumatism. The grape is given the very first place. He is an enthusiastic advocate of what is known in Europe as the grape cure, which provides that for several days the patient eats nothing but grapes, consuming from one to two pounds daily, with a gradual increase to ten pounds.

After a few days of this diet the appetite improves and an increased capacity to endure fatigue is noticed. The grape cure is especially suited to persons who are anæmic, rheumatic, dyspeptic or consumptive.

One of the newest colors in evening shoes is a light primrose, and an improvement on the red Russian leather slippers is the ruby glace kid, which is much softer. There is according to trade parlance a great feeling for heliotrope, and indeed any colored dress can be matched in kid, and any dressing gown in velvet fur-edged slippers.

A little square of soft leather rubbed over with prepared chalk and then shaken out serves many a fair one instead of the more palpable powder puff. If a hemstitched handkerchief be carried, one hem can be opened, the little leather rolled up, pushed in and so secreted.

A Spanish Sandwich.—Two slices of rye bread, cut very thin. Take one and spread first with made mustard, then with cottage cheese; butter the other slice, and when the two are laid together the sandwich is evolved.

Lemon Pie with Raisins.—Take three good-sized lemons and roll till soft; put the juice in a dish, picking out the seeds, and chop the peel very fine. Seed and chop a cupful of raisins, and mix altogether with one and one half cupfuls of molasses; stir well and add a little flour and water. Do not hurry the baking or it will run out. This makes two pies. Bake with two crusts.

Orange Jelly.—The juice of four oranges, the grated rind of one, juice and rind of one lemon, one and one-half cupfuls of sugar. Put one half box of gelatine into cold water, let it stand two hours, add a pint of boiling water and the outer ingredients, pour into moulds and set on ice to cool.

To Clean Carpets.—A solution of one part of ammonia and three of lukewarm water will, if well rubbed into carpets, take out all stains.

LOVE AND PAIN.

BY E. W.

This is the way, the wide world over;
One is beloved, and one is the lover;
One gives, and the other receives.
One lavishes all in a wild emotion,
One offers a smile for a life's devotion;
One hopes, and the other believes.
One lies awake in the night to weep,
And the other drifts into a sweet sound sleep.

This is the way of it, sad earth over;
The heart that breaks is the heart of the lover;
And the other learns to forget.
For what is the use of endless sorrow?
Though the sun goes down, it will rise to-morrow,
And life is not over yet.
Oh! I know this truth, if I know no other,
That Passionate Love is Pain's own mother.

Of Land Tenures.

IN these utilitarian days, when hard cash is the dominant factor in life, we do not expect to find landlords abroad parting with their lands for the merely nominal sum which satisfied some of their ancestors in feudal times.

Land has become too valuable a commodity for such generosity. In the "good old days" when feudalism was in the ascendant—times which, notwithstanding their violence, were not altogether destitute of redeeming features—we find the close personal relationship which subsisted between lord and man sometimes curiously reflected in the services rendered by the vassal in respect of his land.

Students of the law of real property are familiar with the salient features of the old tenures, of knight service, grand and petit serjeanty, and free and common socage; but through these domains there stretch little bypaths which the generality of law students, eager to know only so much historical matter as will explain the present-day condition of the land laws, may easily overlook; these sidepaths, nevertheless, will amply reward the literary wayfarer who seeks to explore them.

Although instances of quaint tenure-services can be found in almost every English county, Kent seems to have enjoyed a singular pre-eminence in this respect. Here are a few examples. The owner of the manor of West Peckham was bound, in return for the grant of the manor, to find a man to carry the king's gosshawks beyond sea; in the case of the manor of Seaton, the lord had either to go himself or provide a man to go as vautrarius—that is, leader of the king's greyhounds—whenever the monarch went to Gascony, and the time to be so given was thus curiously fixed, "until he (the vautrarius) had worn out a pair of shoes worth fourpence, bought at the king's cost!"

But the most ludicrous instance of all was in the case of Archer's Court, an estate in the parish of River, a few miles from Dover; the tenure was in grand serjeantry, the service being that the owner should accompany the king on his various journeys between Dover and Wissant on the French coast, and hold the royal head should there be occasion for it.

While kings can confer gifts of land, they can grant no immunity from the dreaded sea sickness, and what could the poor tenant do if he too, like his liege lord, suffered its pangs? Would it not even show disloyalty in the vassal to feel all right while the august monarch was prostrated?

Another estate in the same county was held by a much more agreeable tenure, namely: The liability to carry the last dish of the second course to the king's table, and present the sovereign with three maple cups.

Presenting gilt spurs, providing a ship or a certain quota of men, or breeding and rearing a falcon or hound were extremely common forms for the services to take.

Leaving Kent, we find that Bury House, in the New Forest, was—perhaps still is—held under the obligation of presenting the sovereign, whoever he or she enters the Forest, with a brace of milk-white greyhounds, a breed being preserved in readiness.

George III., in 1789, was the recipient of the complimentary leash, the incident of the ceremony being considered sufficiently interesting to form the subject of a canvas by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

For many centuries the city of Norwich, in respect of the manor of Carlton, was liable to provide annually twenty-four herring pies for the royal kitchen.

The rent, it appears, originated in the early days when Norwich stood at the head of a wide estuary, when as yet its entrance was not blocked up by the sand-bank on which Yarmouth now stands. Mention is made of the service so late as 1835 in the report on municipal corporations in England.

The city of London has also its curious services to render annually. Each year on the morrow of St. Michael, or between that day and the morrow of St. Martin, the City Solicitor attends before the Queen's Remembrancer, to account for the services due by the city in respect of a piece of waste ground in the county of Salop, called "The Moors," and for a tenement, called "The Forge," in the parish of St. Clement Danes, Strand.

After the reading of certain documents this time-honored proclamation is made: "Oyez, oyez, oyez, tenants and occupiers of a piece of waste ground, called 'The Moors,' in the county of Salop, come forth and do your service."

Two small bundles of peeled twigs, each tied at the ends with red tape, are then produced, one of which the solicitor cuts in two with a billhook, and the other he treats in a similar fashion, with this difference, that a hatchet is substituted for the billhook.

This archaic ceremony symbolizes the right of the Crown, as lord, to receive, and the obligation on the city, as vassal, to furnish fuel as one of the incidents of the tenure. A second proclamation is then made:

"Tenants and occupiers of a certain tenement called 'The Forge,' in the parish of St. Clement Danes, in the County of Middlesex, come forth and do your service."

In response to this summons, the City Solicitor, with all solemnity, counts out six horse-shoes and sixty-one hob-nails, a service acknowledged by the Queen's Remembrancer saying "Good number." This quaint function dates from a very remote period.

With regard to "The Moors," that piece of ground, as appears from the Exchequer Rolls, was granted to one Nicholas de Mora, in the reign of Henry III. As to "The Forge," it represents a piece of ground which was granted, also in the reign of Henry III., to one Walter le Brun, farrier, for the purpose of erecting thereon a forge, which was to be held under the service of rendering yearly the six horse-shoes and sixty-one hobnails. A forge was in fact built, but was demolished during the peasants' revolt, and never re-erected.

The ground on which it stood, sometimes known as Templar's Field, was for long used by the lawyers of the Temple as a tilting ground; but so many riots seem to have been originated by this employment of the ground that the city ultimately acquired it and ousted the Templars.

"The Moors" also at an early date fell into the hands of the corporation, the obligation of rendering the stated services, of course, passing with the property.

Although not particularly curious, the services rendered by the Dukes of Marlborough and Wellington for the estates of Woodstock and Strathfieldsaye respectively are of sufficient historic interest to warrant their inclusion here.

By the statute 2 and 4 of Anne, the Manor of Woodstock and the Hundred of Wooton, with their numerous "appurtenances," were settled on John, Duke of Marlborough, and his heirs, "to be holden of Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, as of her castle of Windsor in free and common socage by Fealty, and rendering to Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, on the second day of August in every year [the anniversary of Blenheim] for ever, at the Castle of Windsor, one standard or colors with three Flower de Luces painted thereupon, for all manner of Rents, Services, Exactions, and Demands whatsoever."

In the same way, the Act 55 Geo. III. c. 186, passed immediately after Waterloo, granted a sum of money to be expended in the purchase of a suitable residence and estate for the Duke of Wellington, which estate when acquired was directed "to be holden by the said Duke and his heirs, and the persons who may be entitled thereto of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, as of his Castle of Windsor in free and common socage by Fealty, and rendering to his Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, on the eighteenth day of June in every year, at the Castle of Windsor, one Tri-colored Flag, for all manner of Rents, Services, Exactions, and Demands whatsoever."

These banners are regularly presented to Her Majesty at Windsor on the two anniversaries, and are then suspended in the Grand Chamber of the Castle, where they are usually pointed out to visitors.

In Scotland tenure-services, analogous in point of singularity, though not so common, are not unknown. Of these the most curious is that of the barony of Carnwath, which was charged with the burden of providing an annual prize, consisting of two pairs of hose containing two half-yards of English cloth, for a foot race.

Elsewhere we read of a more singular case—that of certain lands near Cramond, in Midlothian, which were held under the service of furnishing the sovereign every time he, or she, passed over Cramond Bridge, with a ewer of water, basin and towel. This is said to have originated in a grant by James V. to a peasant of the land of Braehead, in return for services rendered to the monarch.

James was once attacked and hard pressed by his assailants, when a peasant came to the rescue, and assisted in beating off the attacking party. When the conflict was over this peasant conducted James to a barn, where a basin and towel were with some difficulty procured for the king to remove from his person all traces of the fray.

Entering into conversation with his squire, James ascertained that the summit of his ambition was to own the farm on which he labored. Some time afterwards the farm, which belonged to the Crown, fell vacant, whereupon the peasant was requested to visit Holyrood Palace, where he was informed by James that a grant was to be made to him of the farm he had so great an ambition to possess. A charter was subsequently executed confirming the gift, and bearing that the grant was made on the condition that the grantee and his successors should present a ewer, basin and towel for the king to wash his hands each time he happened to pass Cramond Bridge.

The crest, a demi-huntsman winding a horn, and the motto, "Free for a Blast," of the Clerk family of Penicuik, Midlothian, reflect the fact that their estate is held by the service of winding a horn three times whenever the sovereign comes to hunt on the Borough Moor of Edinburg.

MOURN FOR A WEEK.

When a London Jew dies, the funeral is attended by many a quaint old custom. There is never an elaborate show, for flowers, plumes, and all other trappings and ornamentations of woe are forbidden, and a Rothschild would be buried in the same unpolished rough deal coffin as would shelter the last remains of the veriest pauper.

Only men are allowed to follow in the funeral procession, and after the return of the mourners from the simple ceremony at the graveside, they are all expected to partake of a frugal meal of dry bread, salt and pieces of hard-boiled egg.

Immediately there commences the eight days of religious mourning. Strict confinement to the house is enjoined, and the custom has been observed since the time of the patriarch Jacob by all the blood relations of a deceased Israelite.

The mourners are not clad in "sackcloth and ashes" (except symbolically), but they sit all day long on very low stools near the floor, and to relieve the monotony of their mourning, there is a constant procession of friends and acquaintances arriving to offer their sympathy and condolences.

Etiquette demands that the mention of death shall be excluded as far as possible from the mourning room, and the guests considerately endeavor to maintain as cheerful and entertaining a conversation as they can in the circumstances. There is a proverb: "It is meritorious to raise a laugh in the mourning room," and each friend does his best to banish the grim remembrance from the minds of the bereaved. There is, of course, the inevitable reaction at the periodical hours of prayer.

The compulsory absence from work during more than a week necessarily means a very considerable loss of wages to the ordinary Jewish workman, but nearly every one provides for such contingencies by joining a mourning society, which recompenses them for their obligatory idleness.

A most laudable custom, too, is that all the ordinary household cares of cooking and cleaning shall be done by the kindly offices of neighbors. Each guest or comforter as he arrives secretly deposits in some handy corner his contribution towards the general stock of provisions. His packet of tea or dish of fruit will only be found on his departure, for delicacy demands that the gift shall be made clandestinely.

One kind friend will anonymously provide the dinner by sending a roasted joint from the nearest baker's, while the vegetables to accompany it will be arranged for by another.

It would be counted an insult to refuse such considerate gifts or to hint at a superfluity, and there is seldom a household where the store cupboard will not be quietly filled the whole week long in this commendable fashion.

The bereaved mother or daughter is thus freed from all thought of domestic cares until the times arrives for her to wearily take up the round of duties again, but with her sorrow lightened and her life sweetened by her friends' unofficious kindness.

A SHARP PEOPLE. F. Marion Crawford, the novelist, who has met many Armenians in the East, says of them: "I doubt whether they are the innocent, confiding, inoffensive Christians that the American people believe them to be. My experience with them is that they are the sharpest, shrewdest and trickiest of all Eastern people.

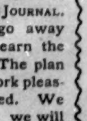
"They say in Turkey that it takes ten Jews to equal one Armenian, and five Armenians to equal one Persian in sharp business dealings. They have many able men among them, and I doubt not that their leaders have to a certain extent fomented this trouble, hoping that the governments of Europe would interfere, and that Armenia would be entirely freed from Turkish rule."

In regard to the Turks, he says: "I would rather trade with a Turk or a Jew in any part of the East than with a Christian. I have the highest respect for Christianity, but the Christians of the East are not like us.

"The business men among them are to a large extent a set of sharpers, so much so that the words Oriental Christian in the minds of Eastern travelers are almost synonymous with that of thief.

"The Turks are, as a rule, very devout. Nearly all of them read the Koran, and even the men of the better classes are careful to conform to the details of everyday Mahomedan whrship."

THE most expensive product in the world is said to be the charcoal thread employed for incandescent electric lamps. In reducing its price to the basis of pounds weight, it is found that the filaments for lamps of 20 candles are worth $6 000 per pound, and that for lamps of 30 candles they are worth $12 000 per pound. The former have a diameter of twenty thousandths of a millimetre (a millimetre equals 0.0394 in.), and the latter four and a-half thousandths of a millimetre. The filaments for lamps of three candles are so light that it would require nearly 1 500 000 of them to weigh 1 lb. As the length of each is 10 cm. (3,937 in.) their total length would be 187 miles.



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Humorous.

"Marriage, not mirage, Jane, here in your letter,
With your education, you surely know better."
Quickly spake my young wife, while I sat in confusion—
"'Tis quite correct, Thomas, they're each an illusion."

When is a plaid dress like an apple?—When it's a tart un.

Dick: "Would you be hurt if I kissed you?"
Nelly: "There's a hospital close by."

She: "I hear you said I talked too much."
He: "No; I said you talked all the time."

It is a singular fact that red is made from madder, and that bulls are made madder by red.

A: "Someone gave my boy a drum for a birthday present but it turned out all right."
B: "How so?"
A: "I gave him a pocket knife."

"I should have no objection to my wife's reigning," said an affectionate husband, "if it were not for the fact that when she reigns she is apt to storm also."

Bertha: "What is the height of your ambition, dear?"
Marie, blushing: "Oh, something between five and a-half and six feet."

Wiggs: "Young Screecher has a remarkable imagination. He is a great thinker."
Waggs: "Indeed?"
Wiggs: "Yes; he thinks he can sing."

Hungry Higgins: "As fur eight hours being enough fer a day's work——"
Weary Watkins: "It ain't. Any man who'll do a day's work orter git six months."

Mudge: "What would you do if you were me? Thomas called me a gibbering idiot."
Wade: "I'd make him prove it, every bit of it. I don't believe anyone ever heard you gibber."

"Do you think it's true that every man has his price?" asked the heiress.
"I'm sure I don't know," he answered thoughtfully, "but if you want a bargain you needn't look any farther.

Judge, to witness: "You say you have known the prisoner all your life?"
Witness: "Yes, my lord."
Judge: "Now, in your opinion, do you think he could be guilty of stealing this money?"
Witness: "How much was it?"

"I tried to pay the New Woman a compliment last night in my speech, but it didn't seem to go down well."
"What did she say?"
"I said that the New Woman would leave large footprints on the sands of time."

Hardupp: "Isn't it a beastly thing to have a lot of debts you can't pay."
Gradgrind: "I know of only one thing worse."
"And what's that?"
"To have a lot of debts you can't make other people pay."

Father, showing off his baby boy to bachelor friend: "Well, what do you think of him? Fine boy, isn't he?"
Bachelor Friend: "Yes, very fine boy, but he's bald. But then (glancing at father's bald head) children are not satisfied nowadays unless they can begin where their fathers left off."

An impatient author wrote to a magazine editor to know when his poem would appear. The editor replied:
"Perhaps you do not know that there are 3,000 poems ahead of yours, all waiting to see daylight. Yours was written for posterity, and it will be published when posterity arrives."

First Dog, sadly: "They talk of taking me on an Arctic expedition."
Second Dog: "Well, don't be so downhearted. They may not run short of provisions."
First Dog: "But even if they don't, they may kill me to give people the impression that they did run short."

"Well, Mrs. Brown, if yez don't raise me wages I shall be obliged to be after lavin' yez when me month is up."
"Why, Jane, when you came here you knew scarcely anything. It was I who taught you."
"And shure, mum, wouldn't I be aither bein' wuth more now when I know so much than whin I didn't know nothin' at all

Mrs. Beeson: "George, what makes you so quiet when you are out in company? You sit there like a dumb person. Why don't you talk more?"
Mr. Beeson: "My dear, I do talk when I am out alone. I was quiet this evening because I thought it wouldn't be just the thing for one family to monopolize the conversation."

Two weasels found an egg. "Let us not fight for it," said the elder weasel, "but enter into partnership."
"Very good," said weasel the younger.
So taking the egg between them, each sucks an end.

"My children," said Redtapes, the attorney, "though you have but one client between you, make the most of him."

"My stars!" ejaculated a traveler who had, while journeying through the Arkansas backwoods, stopped at a log cabin to get his dinner. "You should not let that child play with that loaded revolver; it is a terrible risk!"
"Aw, I dunno," replied the host, nonchalantly. "I've got about fou'teen mo' children around the place somewhere."

HOW THEY ARE FOUGHT.

To the practical present-day American dueling appears an absurd and ridiculous custom. A challenge nowadays would be regarded as an invitation to murder, pure and simple, or as a piece of grotesque tomfoolery.

For a gentleman to call out an enemy would be equivalent to calling him a fool, and acknowledging the challenger himself was an idiot. Yet it is only just over fifty years since the custom died out in the United States and England.

It is only in English-speaking countries that dueling is not still practiced. In all other parts of the civilized world every gentleman is bound by the code of honor to avenge an insult by seeking to kill, and running the risk of being killed by the offender.

It is in France where duels are most common, over four thousand meetings taking place every year. Military men, journalists and politicians form the larger proportion of the duellists, and to members of the last two professions fencing and shooting are as necessary a part of their education as military training is of the former.

In French duels there are two seconds, whose duty it is to arrange all the details of the contest. The challenged person has, of course, the choice of weapons.

In a duel with swords one of the seconds is armed with a stout walking-stick with which to strike up the weapons in case of foul fighting or immediately one of the combatants is wounded, however slightly.

A duel with pistols is a very different affair from ordinary firing when one has time to take aim. The antagonists stand twenty-five paces apart, their right sides facing each other—in order to present the least surface to their opponent's aim—with their pistols held by their sides.

One of the seconds gives the word of command: "Fire! One, two, three;" and the shot must be fired between "one," and "three." As the words are spoken rapidly, often as fast as they can be uttered, it is impossible to do more than glance along the barrel before firing.

The skill, however, of some duellists is remarkable. M. Clemenceau is the most accurate marksman in France, and some of his feats savor more of magic than skill.

He challenged a journalist who had insulted him by saying that Clemenceau's character did not deserve recognition, and that he for one would not take off his hat to him in the street. Before the duel Clemenceau told his opponent, as he would not lift his hat to him, he would take it off for him with a bullet. Clemenceau did not quite succeed, but his bullet turned the hat half-way round the journalist's head—with removing it, however.

On another occasion Clemenceau promised to cut off his opponent's ears it two shots were arranged. Though only one shot was exchanged, Clemenceau was good ashis word, and shot off one ear.

The code of honor lays down certain cases in which a gentleman can refuse a challenge without tarnishing his reputation. Very near relatives may refuse to attempt to murder each other, a debtor should not try to kill his creditor, and a gentleman would not dream of fighting a notorious blackguard, for to give satisfaction to such a person is obviously an abuse of terms.

A celebrated duellist may also refuse to meet an ordinary person, though a challenge from a person of lower rank cannot be ignored by any but those who have established their reputation in several duels.

As a rule French duels are harmless. In twelve hundred duels fought between civilians during the last twenty years, only a dozen combatants were killed; the same percentage were injured, while the remaining ninety-eight per cent. left the field of battle unscathed.

Among German students duels are common, but very rarely does one terminate fatally.

Duels are fought when no provocation has been given. The Court of Honor, decides that one is to be fought between two given members with the object of accustoming them to use their swords and to keep their hands well in.

From the decision of the Court there is no appeal, and a member refusing to obey is expelled from the Corps. Swords are the weapons in these duels, and despite the use of leather gurads and padding, many flesh wounds are inflicted, though serious results are rare.

The students pride themselves on their scars and wounds, and in order to make them more prominent, they anoint them with beer.

In Austria the duel, though less common, is far more deadly than in France and Germany. Pistols are the usual weapons, and the antagonists are placed only a few paces from each other. With the sword long and furious duels are also fought out. Both military men and civilians fight with great fierceness.

Russian duellists stand fifteen yards apart and they are allowed to advance five paces at a given signal and fire at will. If both parties advance to the limit before firing, the distance between them is reduced to five yards.

Should one fire and miss, the other is allowed to advance his five paces before returning the fire. Sometimes one is mortally wounded before firing, but has still sufficient strength left to advance five yards, take steady aim, and shoot his opponent dead.

In the Baltic Provinces this sanguinary method is replaced by one still more horrible. The combatants stand only three paces apart; the pistols are held pointing upwards, and at a given signal they are lowered and discharged. It would seem impossible to avoid killing one's man at such close quarters, but this is not the case.

The duellists are both so anxious to get the first shot that both often miss, the sharp, downward movement of the arm causing the bullet to be buried in the ground or only wound the lower extremities. Sometimes four or five shots are exchanged without either party being injured.

Among the hot-blooded Italians and Spaniards dueling is a common everyday method of settling disputes. The sword is the usual weapon, though the stiletto is also frequently used. Sometimes, in order to insure the death of at least one of the combatants, they are tied foot to foot and fight it out with daggers.

CURIOUS CRETAN CUSTOM.—One of the curious Cretan customs which prevail on the eve of every insurrection is known as fraternization. One of its immediate results is the cessation of all feuds, enmity, and rancor.

It is carried out as follows. A number of individuals choose a young girl, who must be pretty—no difficult matter in Crete. They inform her parents of their intention, and the needful consent is never withheld.

Then a priest is sent for and told to begin the ceremony. He takes a very long girdle and joins all the men with it in a circle, in the centre of which the young girl is placed. Then the clergyman recites a number of prayers, and winds up by giving his benediction to all present.

The moment he pronounces his last "Amen" the circle and its centre stand, to all religious and social intents and purposes, in the relation of brothers and sister to each other. Each of the males is bound in honor—and a Cretan knows no more sacred obligation—to protect the girl throughout her life, but none of them can ever take her for his wife. She is and remains their sister, in the eyes of the priest and the people, to the end of her days. But they must also stand by and succor each other, and if needs be, at the cost of their life itself.

DAILY OCCUPATION.—It is not unusual to banish from this portion of life any idea or hope of peace. That is kept for the evening, when labor is over, and the comforts of home and rest take its place; or it is reserved for the evening of life, when exertion ceases and energy droops; or it is relegated to some time in the future, when sufficient means have been secured to make work appear unnecessary.

It stands for the realization in some way of ease, comfort, leisure, luxury, opportunity. On the other hand, toil, effort, hardship, struggle, are all put in opposition to it.

Thus men will often live lives of labor and sacrifice, hoping by this means to obtain peace and tranquillity when the toil is over. But, to unite the two, to enjoy peace in toil, tranquillity in effort, seldom occurs to them. Yet no peace worth having exists without power, and power must have its outlet in activity.

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